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OR, THE MEDIATORIAL...

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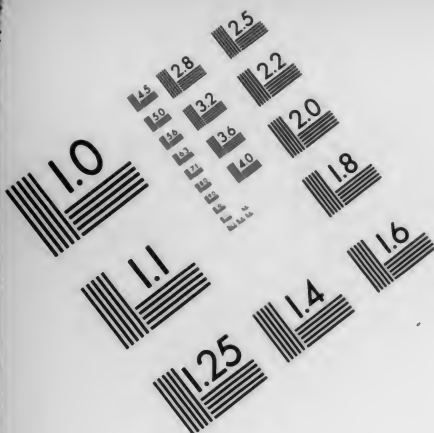
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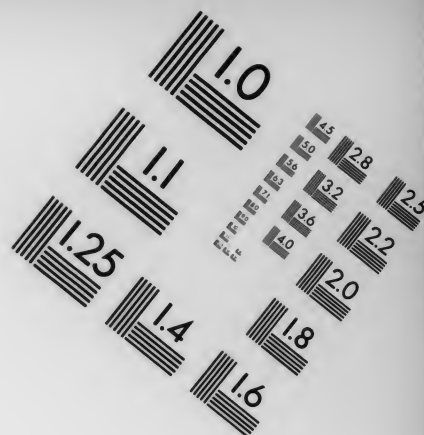


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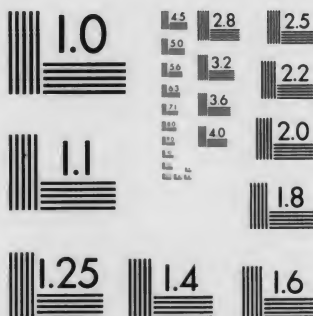
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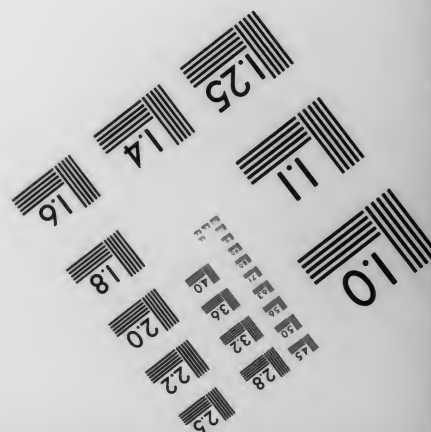
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X
THE
CURE of DEISM:
OR, THE
Mediatorial Scheme
BY
JESUS CHRIST
The ONLY TRUE RELIGION.

In ANSWER to the OBJECTIONS started, and to
the very imperfect Account of *The Religion of NATURE*, and
of CHRISTIANITY, given by the Two Oracles of DEISM,
the AUTHOR of *Christianity as old as the Creation*; and the
AUTHOR of the *Characteristicks*.

WITH
An APPLICATION to *Papists, Quakers,*
Socinians, and Scepticks.

AND
An APPENDIX, in ANSWER to a Book en-
titled, *The Moral Philosopher*, or a Dialogue between
a Christian *Deist* and a Christian *Jew*.

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The Second Edition, corrected and improved with large Additions.

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Elisha VOL. I. *Smith*

I came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it. 1
Ye believe in GOD, believe also in ME.

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M. DCC. XXXVII.

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To the Right Reverend Fa-
ther in God, EDMUND,
Lord Bishop of London.

My LORD,

239.
THE *Introduction* to the follow-
ing Scheme of true Religion
publishes the *peculiar* Reason
of this Address to your Lord-
ship, where it shews from whom
the Plan of it is taken: Though the Author
(had he set his Name) might alledge the usual
Motive of these Applications, *viz.* the Receipt
of Favours from your Lordship, he begs Ac-
ceptance of the Present from a superior and
particular Obligation of inscribing a Work
executed in Pursuance of your own general
Direction; gratefully remembering that he,
who gives the Model, and lays down the
Plan, is the *Chief* Architect. And the more
assiduously it is follow'd by more able Un-
der-Builders, I am persuaded, they will be
so just as to impute the Beauty, Strength
and Solidity of their Labour to your Lord-
ship's

A 2

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DEDICATION.

ship's Advice and Superintendency, as a judicious and faithful *Overseer* of the Building of the Household of God, built upon the only Foundation of eternal Life, as it is received and copy'd from Heaven. And I am abundantly convinced the more your *Lordship's* Model of representing Christianity in, and through its glorious *Mediator*, is consider'd by Christians in general, and study'd by its Clergy in particular, it will more and more appear to be founded in the *Nature and Reason of Things*, as well as in the *Revelation* from Heaven; and for that Reason, to be without Controversy, and to the Prevention of Controversy, the sole best Method both for convincing, and reclaiming Gainfayers; and for establishing all Christians in the Knowledge and Possession of the Truth.

MAY your *Lordship* long continue an adequate Advancer of the Kingdom of God and *Christ*, in its Truth and Purpose, Laws and Practice; and may you very long live an Ornament to that Religion you have so well defended, is the cordial Wish of the *Author*, and of every good Christian.

THE



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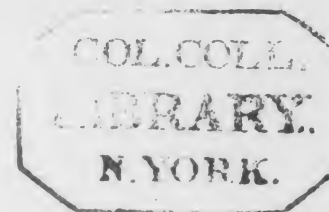
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C H A P. XIV.

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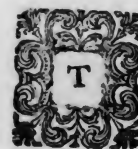
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INTRO-



INTRODUCTION.



THE Author of *Christianity as old, &c.* introduces his Book, declaring, "The Subject he writes upon is " of the last Importance, and " makes no Apology for writing " upon it, but writing so late." I readily agree with him in the vast Importance of the Subject; and, after so many Answers, the Publick may justly expect some Apology for my writing so late.

THE true State of the Case is this: The Author of the following Sheets living at a great Distance from *London*, and not able to purchase many Books, had never, till very lately, read either of the Authors he replies to. Upon a *particular* Occasion, he was favour'd with the Loan of one of the Answers to the first Author, by a neighbouring Clergyman; which so awaken'd his Curiosity, as to make Interest with other Neighbours to borrow the two Authors he has taken under Consideration, and all the Replies to them he could procure; and it has been his good Fortune to have seen most, he may add all of any Character, by the Report of others.

NOTWITHSTANDING those Answers, which have their several Value and Use; the Author of the following is of Opinion, that

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an Attempt to cure *Deism* effectually, can never be too late, but is particularly seasonable in an Age so lamentably infected with it, according to the universal Complaint and Concern of all Christians from all Quarters, as *the Sin* of the Age, productive of many others: nor too carefully adapted to Persons so *seemingly* studious of the Nature of Things, and the Force of Arguments, industriously at the same time lying upon the catch, to collect and expose all weak ones in Defence of Christianity. He is so far in the Belief of *modern Deists*, as to regard the *Two Authors* he replies to, as the chief Bulwarks, or rather the *Old and New Testament* of their little Faith, I meant to say, their small Reason: Who being dead, yet speak, as the Two Oracles of all their Sentiments. As such, they can't be displeased that I have quoted them as justly, and argued as fairly, as they ought to do with respect to the Scriptures of the Christians. And, as they so very well know and hug themselves in the victorious Certainty of all that can be alleg'd in Defence of their Opinion, by those mighty Champions, laborious in the Scheme, and perfect Masters of the same, they can no longer offer an Excuse for suspending their Judgment; that they are, or can *now* be ignorant of ALL that can be said for their Cause. They are sure no After-Argument can arise, that can exceed what has been urg'd by them; with great Confidence and Satisfaction therefore, they retire, one and all, under that

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that Standard, where the Collection is of all their Forces. There is very lately arrived in their Camp a new Squadron call'd the *Forlorn Hope* consisting of a Strange, unsiz'd, disagreeing Medley of Recruits: But these, are regularly attack'd in the *Appendix* to this Edit.

NOTWITHSTANDING they are such able Writers, in the Opinion of their Admirers and Followers, I have the Candor to think they are not enslaved to *their* Authority, with the same blind Attachment the *Jews* are to their *Rabbies*, the sole invincible Chain, that binds the *common* inferior *Jews* from embracing Christianity.

ARE those then the Leaders, who give the Strain of thinking, and Copy of Believing to others? Are these the Writings indeed which have bewitch'd and deceiv'd, have harangu'd and confounded so many, almost out of the due Use and true Benefit of Reason making its Enquiry, as they are supposed to do, after true Religion? Are these the choicest Arguments, the strongest Forces that can be marshall'd for about 30 Years together, and from Contributions lifted from all Parts, since the famous *Æra* of the *Rights of the Church*, against the Religion they have been baptized into? Are the joint Endeavours of these two; the utmost Efforts, the all-sufficient confiding Grounds of *Deism*, for recommending it as the *true* Religion, and rejecting Christianity?

BUT what if the ensuing Scheme shall make it appear in a Method different from all other

iv The INTRODUCTION.

other Answers, That true Religion is only to be sought, and found, in the *true Nature*, and *present Constitution* of Things; discoverable in Part, from their visible Frame and Adjustment; and further discover'd according to Man's Occasions, and the Counsels of Divine Wisdom, by *Revelation*, from their great Author and Founder. Neither is this any begging of Questions, if it appears at the same time, to the full Satisfaction of their Inquiry into the *true Nature of God, and the true Nature of Man*, in his present Condition, That those Discoveries in the Christian Revelation do actually give in the most reasonable, solid, and undeniable true Account of the NATURE of both. If to know God, and Ourselves truly, both the Dignity and Degeneracy of our Nature, is the Province and Perfection of Reason in this World, the Christian Religion must be allowed to be the Perfection of Human reason; because above all others it leads us to that Knowledge, our own Reason being Judge. From that Knowledge results the perfecter Discovery of the true Religion of Man, in the Need and Necessity of *some* Mediator between God and Man; at the same time, the Revelation shews, who is that *one, only true* MEDIATOR.

BEFORE whose Advent in the Flesh, the Necessity of *some* Mediator was confessed and proclaim'd by the common Voice of Mankind, over the Face of the whole Earth. From one common Apprehension as clear as
that

The INTRODUCTION. v

that of the Existence of God, all the World united in the fundamental Sense of the Perfection, Purity, and Holiness of *his* Nature; and no less of the conscious Sinfulness cleaving to, and discomposing that of *Man*. The universal Conscience and Persuasion of the infallible Certainty of each of those Truths, humbled them into some proper Distance from God, but threw them, (without due Advice of their Reason,) wheresoever the *primæval Promise* of the true, appointed Mediator was lost in their Generations, into a wrong Choice, and worse Dependance upon worthless Mediators of their own setting up, for gaining the desired Access and Acceptance with their God, through the Merit, as they imagined, of Sacrifice and Ceremonies: Hence the wide-spreading *Idolatry* of the World. And in due time the remedial Gospel appear'd to fulfil the *Promise*, to recover the Notion, to fix the Faith of the one true Mediator; and to destroy those Works of the Devil which brought in so many false Mediators of the Worship of the true God. A Worship! which of Course, being immoral in its Principle, let in all Immorality like a Flood-gate; and by viewing God through such a faulty discolour'd Medium, multiplied, and so lost the Knowledge of him.

IF then it is certain, that before the coming of *Christ* there never was any Religion without a Mediator, nor never can be any *true* Religion, in the present degenerate State

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of Mankind, without the *true* Mediator appointed of *God*, between God and Man, implicitly, or expressly adher'd to; and if in the Sequel, the MEDIATORIAL SCHEME, *God in Christ reconciling the World to himself*, appears to be the only fix'd Center, that affords the true Knowledge of God, and of Man; wherein all the moral governing Perfections of the former, in innumerable Instances, of giving, and forgiving Goodness, meet, salute, and are very propitious to the State and Condition of the latter; if this is the only Medium in the World that compleatly connects and conciliates the governing Attributes of God, to the moral Powers, and conscious Imperfections of Man; and if above all Things this consults moreover the *Glory and Honour* of God, in representing him most amiable, and yet most awful, in every respect; and no less consults and provides for the *Good* of Men, in raising their Hopes to Assurance of Acceptance, dispelling Fears, and preventing any Presumption at the same time; it is humbly hoped that this Scheme, appealing as it does to the Deist's own *Criterion of true Religion* (as appears in the sequel) will be admitted to put in its Plea as such. And if *Jesus Christ*, in the Nature of Things as reveal'd in Scripture, and set forth in this Scheme, is likewise found to be the *best fitted*, and the *sole accomplish'd* Mediator for effecting and perfecting these Things, then it must be granted, that he is the very Archetype, the *αὐτοπαύρον* of a true perfect Reconciliation

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conciliation between God and Man; then is his the *only* true Religion in the World.

AND in an Enquiry of so great a Moment, every open Deist, and every secret Favourer of their Opinion, is most seriously and affectionately intreated to take *these Oracles* of Deism once more into their Hands, and revise and compare them carefully with this Answer, and judge impartially. I add the same Request with respect to the *Moral Philosopher*, a *New Oracle* very contradictory to the other.

AND if this important Religion has so intimate a Connexion with the Religion of Nature, as to be the greatest Perfecter of it, by affording the *only* Means, Aids, Motives, and Helps for performing it; and, if in shewing this admirable harmonious Connexion of Christianity with Natural Religion, in a *new Light*, unconsider'd perhaps as yet by any *Deist*, a clear View and Prospect opens for discovering the TRUE *Obligations*, and *Foundation* of MORALITY: For there can be no doubt, in case the Religion of this Mediator is the *only* true Religion, that the true Grounds of Morality must be drawn from its Source, and *Fountain Head* only, as I have clearly shewn*. Nor can there be any Morality or natural Religion with respect to another World, besides, or without *this Foundation* of God's being a *Rewarder*: Every

* Vol. II. pag. 59 to 130. compared with the last *Chap.* towards the End

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other nominal Morality, without this sacred, this its own proper Obligation first laid, being none other than *Civil*, or *Politick* Institution of Morality, upon the *Epicurean* Scheme of Virtue being the Way and Means of attaining the highest Felicity of Man in *this Life*; but, acting without the Belief of Providence, regardless of future Rewards and Punishments, has nothing of the *Religion* of Morality in it, and therefore can never deserve the Name of natural Religion.

IN a Question therefore of so great Dignity and Moment, as *what is the only true Religion?* it is earnestly intreated for their own Sake, as well as for the Honour of human Reason, that all Persons of their Sentiments, whether they own, or decline the Name of *Deist*, will be so candid, as to favour this Aspect of Christianity with their Perusal.

THE *Deists* I have to do with, are indeed so candid, as to declare, 1. What will not convince. 2. What will satisfy them, as to the Truth and Excellency of the Christian Religion. And I have all along had that particular Regard to their Declaration, as the latest that comes from them, after abundance of disputing, and a Multitude of Books, as to confine myself to that wherein they say, they only seek Satisfaction. There is but one *Postulatum* in the Way; in order to open the Scene; I was obliged to begin with, *one* Supposition, *i. e. that Man was once in a State of Innocence*; and was soon after, and
has

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has been ever since in a *fallen degenerate Condition*; though even that continues a Supposition but for a very few Pages, before I actually demonstrate, that it must have been so, from two self-evident Propositions: That being once proved, all the rest follows in a Chain.

AT the same Time the two Authors, to whom I reply, and have evidently shewn to be grossly mistaken in the true Nature of Things, and the Force of Argument, positively declare what will not convince them with respect to the Christian Revelation, they plainly intimate what *will*. The noble Author of *Characteristicks*, first in Date, and longest in Vogue, has several Flings at *Miracles* as good-for-nothing Proofs; though it must be acknowledged a greater Miracle than all that are reported in the *Jewish* or *Christian* Institutes; that either of those Religions, opposing the reigning darling Vices of Mankind, should be received in the World, without *Miracles* to introduce them at the first: But in a Tract published afterwards, he speaks more openly. "Let it be your chief Endeavour to make Acquaintance with what is *Good*; that by seeing perfectly, by the Help of Reason, what is *Good*, and what *Ill*, you may prove whether that, which is from Revelation, be not perfectly good and conformable to this Standard. For if so, the very End of the Gospel proves it Truth. And that, which to the Vulgar is only prove-able by Miracles, and teachable by positive
Precepts

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“ Precepts and Commands, to the wise and
 “ virtuous is demonstrated by the Nature of
 “ the thing. So that how can we forbear to
 “ give our Assent to those Doctrines, and that
 “ Revelation which is deliver’d to us, and
 “ enforced by Miracles and Wonders? But to
 “ us, the very Test and Proof of the Divineness
 “ and Truth of that Revelation, is from the
 “ *Excellence of the Things* revealed: otherwise
 “ the Wonders themselves would have little
 “ Effect or Power; nor could they be tho-
 “ roughly depended on, were we even as
 “ near to them, as those who lived a Thou-
 “ sand Years since; when they were freshly
 “ wrought, and strong in the Memory of
 “ Men †.

BEFORE I leave this Author, who has
 led the Van of modern Deism for many Years,
 and is, perhaps, the subtlest Adversary that
 ever wrote against Christianity; I would
 observe that his pernicious Design is so deeply
 and artfully laid, as to be understood only by
 the *initiated*; and commonly mistaken, nay,
 sometimes applauded, by very honest Chri-
 stians. Being thorough Master of his own
 Scheme, he begins his Sap at Christianity, by
 undermining natural Religion. He impercepti-
 bly betrays Virtue under an insinuating Appear-
 ance of fawning Love and Friendship for it,
 and carries on the Attack the more successfully
 under the Cover of two popular Sentiments, to

† *Several Letters* by a N. Lord to a young Man at the Uni-
 versity, pag. 32.

both

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both of which I have allowed all the true
 Sense, and Religion that can belong to them.
 1. *Affection* for the *Publick*. 2. The Love of
 Virtue *for Virtues Sake*; and, at the same
 Time, vilifies future Rewards and Punish-
 ments, throwing them out of his Scheme;
 though they actually, and perpetually are the
 vital Reasons and Obligations of all *true*
 Morality, as it is *Religion*; and so by sub-
 verting the *real* Foundation, effectually de-
 stroys the *Thing* Virtue, and leaves nothing
 but the Name.

I HAVE also detected his other ill Designs
 against Christianity, in other Parts of his
 Writing, and offer’d the proper Remedy. And
 by that time the Reader has gone thro’ both
 Volumes, I doubt not but he will find abundant
 Reasons for giving up the modish Idolatry of
 worshipping his Opinions, and adoring the fine
 deceiving Imagery of his false, deformed Sen-
 timents.

THE Author of *Christianity as old, &c.*
 likewise enters his protest against any Eviction
 from *Miracles*, and condescends, at the same
 Time, to set forth, what it is that must satis-
 fy him and his Disciples. Besides ridiculing
 them*, he declares, “ Without judging Reli-
 “ gion by its *internal Marks* there is nothing
 “ but Miracles true or false, if they are believ-
 “ ed, (and where are they not?) will have
 “ the same Effect: Nay, if Miracles can be
 “ perform’d by Evil, as well as by good Be-

* *Page*. 177, 181.

“ ings,

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ings, the worst Religion may have most
 “ Miracles, as needing them most*.” Would
 “ not Christians themselves think it sufficient
 “ Proof of a Religion’s not coming from God,
 “ if it wanted any of those *internal Marks*,
 “ by which the Truth of all Religion is to be
 “ tried, without enquiring into its Miracles or
 “ any other external Proof†.” “ The Good of
 “ Mankind is the Test, the Criterion or *inter-
 “ nal Evidence*, by which we are to judge‡.”
 And he insists upon “ reading the Scripture
 “ with the Freedom of assenting or dissent-
 “ ing, just as we judge it agrees or disagrees.
 “ with the Light of Nature, and the *Reason of
 “ Things*||.” That we are “ not to be-
 “ lieve the Doctrine, because contained in
 “ Scripture ; but the Scripture on Account
 “ of the Doctrines‡.”

AND as this is an Age that will acquiesce, and be govern'd by nothing but Enquiries into the NATURE OF THINGS, I am willing to take all the Disciples of these two great Masters at the Word of their Principals. And, in order to oblige them as far as I can, in relieving their Complaints, that Nobody has shewn them, and they cannot of themselves perceive the *Reasons*, the *Excellency*, the *internal Evidence* of the three *Positives* of Christianity which they stick at; and whereon they find such Strefs is laid, that there is no Christianity without them, *viz.* the Use and Benefit of a *Mediator*, and the Use and Be-

* Pag. 169. † Pag. 181. ‡ Pag. 385. || Pag. 201.
 † Pag. 371. nefit

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ness of the *Sacraments* instituted by him. These, say they, the Christians call Mysteries, and they keep them so, for any thing we can learn by them, or concerning them, worthy of God to appoint, or engaging of that great Good, the Salvation of Man, to embrace and comply with. They seem to be unanimously of this Opinion.

“ S H E W us once plainly and particularly
“ even with the Help of your Revelation,
“ that *intrinsic Evidence, Fitness, &c.* of
“ those Things, which you have so long and
“ so often declined, and we will become the
“ Christians you desire us, and no longer
“ think meanly and slightly of, or any more
“ look upon that Religion with Indifference
“ or Contempt. We will never after that,
“ repeat our Cavils against the *Miracles*;
“ much less the *Prophecies* and their Accom-
“ plishment, which it boasts of; we will as
“ readily grant the *Record* of it, as *such*, to
“ be as genuinely and authentickly convey’d
“ down in all its original Design, as *Xeno-*
“ *phon’s* memorable Things of *Socrates* in its
“ Design; who declares almost every Thing
“ upon the Evidence of what he had seen,
“ and heard himself; and that there is as
“ much Harmony in the *Evangelists*, as in
“ *Xenophon* and *Plato*, relating the Deeds and
“ Discourses of their Master. We will drop
“ the Pretence of the *Enthusiasm* of the first
“ Christians; the *Fate* and *Necessity* of Hu-
“ man Actions; our Fleers at *some* Explana-
“ tions

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“ tions of the Doctrine of the Trinity ; our
 “ *satirical Strokes* likewise for depreciating,
 “ by making all Priests alike ; the late amuf-
 “ ing *Fable* for confounding Good and Evil ;
 “ the *Philosopher's Prayer* ; and the Design of
 “ publishing the *second Part of Christianity as*
 “ *old, &c.** having, in Truth, spent all our
 “ Forces in the *first* Volume. All these we
 “ will immediately call in, and put a Stop to :
 “ for every one of them, in their Turns, were
 “ directed to nothing else, but to keep up and
 “ increase the Spirit of Dislike and Opposi-
 “ tion, and to bait and teaze the Christians
 “ with, till they vouchsafe to come to the
 “ *Point* ; and afford us that Evidence we are
 “ in Quest of, and they have been so very
 “ sparing in. Let them once produce the *in-*
 “ *ternal Marks of the Goodness* of those
 “ Things ; it will render their external Notes
 “ and Proofs of the Truth superfluous to us :
 “ Give us their *intrinsic Evidence* and *Excel-*
 “ *lence*, according to the *true Nature of*
 “ *Things*, if it is discover'd by their Revela-
 “ tion, and if it is true what is said of it, that
 “ the Christian Revelation has discover'd the
 “ *Goodness*, as well as the Truth of all Things
 “ pertaining to Life and Godliness ; Christians
 “ may then not only pretend, but prevail in
 “ making Profelytes of us ; feed us with
 “ Reason, as well as all Faith, in those Things,
 “ and we will return to the Fold of the great
 “ Shepherd and Bishop of Souls ; as many of

* See *Bee*, N^o. 118.

“ us

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“ us as do indeed prefer Truth to Falshood,
 “ Safety to Hazard, and a Life of Reason and
 “ Order, before the ignoble and irregular
 “ Gratifications either of Sense, or of Spirit.
 “ S H E W us our natural Religion, which
 “ we so justly value and love even to a Jeal-
 “ ously, render'd more practicable to the
 “ Conduct and Comfort of human Capacity,
 “ by *Jesus Christ* ; by *Faith* and *Mystery*,
 “ by his multiply'd *Means, Aids, Motives,*
 “ *Helps* ; then you may justly call the Sin-
 “ cerity of our Pretensions to *that* natural
 “ Religion in Question, if we any longer
 “ neglect to embrace him, and with him, and
 “ through him, the best Ways and Means
 “ in the World, to the best End in the World.
 “ After you have fully reliev'd our *Queries*,
 “ with respect to these principal *Desiderata* ;
 “ and our Curiosity as to Christ appearing no
 “ sooner ; and fairly satisfy'd our Minds, which
 “ will be satisfy'd with nothing but the *Rea-*
 “ *son of Things* in Matters of Duty perpetu-
 “ ally obligatory to a rational Agent, we shall
 “ be ready to own, nay, you will force us to
 “ confess *another Sort* of Meaning ; and from
 “ our inward Sentiments acknowledge, that
 “ there is indeed a savoury Sense, and a
 “ saving Use in Christianity : And even join
 “ you in extolling the Wisdom and Favour,
 “ and admiring the Divine Beauty and Ex-
 “ cellency of that Institution. And if any af-
 “ ter that continue DEISTS, in a Chri-
 “ stian, especially in any *Protestant* Country,
 “ you

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“ you may take it for granted, and you shall
 “ have us for Witnesses against them, that
 “ their Boast of Virtue, and the Religion of
 “ Nature, is in Reality, what it has been ge-
 “ nerally reckon’d, *viz.* as to its Pretence,
 “ Hypocrisy; as to its Performance, impractica-
 “ ble; and as to its Hopes, desperate.”

To oblige, I say, so large a Number of
 distinguish’d Opposers in their importunate,
 and not unreasonable Demand, I have dispos’d
 the following Sheets into a View of giving
 them the Satisfaction they are so desirous of;
 and, as I go along, both candidly cite, and an-
 swer their Objections, in Hopes to take away
 all Excuse from future Infidelity. That, in Case
Deism should hereafter appear in a *Prote-*
stant Country, it may appear in its proper
 Colours, to be the Result and Consultation
 not of Virtue and Morality, but of Wilful-
 ness and Wickedness; not of Reason and sin-
 cere Inquiry, but of Art and Design; or the
 prevailing Success of the secret Artifices of
Popery.

To attain this valuable End in a perspicu-
 ous Method, I have thrown the View of Re-
 ligion into the most clear Prospect of *Ends*
 and *Means*; by the Help of which, every
 Thing appears in its true Proportion; every
 Thing falls into Order, and ranges itself into
 the proper Place and Precedence, Dignity
 and Importance, Use and Design, which God
 and the Nature of Things have allotted to
 them: The Difference and Value for every
 Precept,

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Precept, the Zeal and Moderation for any
 Parts of Religion, (though they are of a seem-
 ing equal Obligation, by being indiscriminate-
 ly commanded,) appear by this Light in their
 distinct Degrees and Sizes: Ignorance being
 equally as improper a Mother for *Zeal*, as it is
 of *Devotion*. Whilst FAITH in the *Me-*
diator will no less gloriously, than conspicu-
 ously present itself in its Divine Station, fully
 informing us of all Things proper for us to
 know, and do; in order to influence, enliven,
 and effectuate every Thing in Morality and Re-
 ligion. And, if we will join it with our
 own Endeavours, it offers to lift us fallen
 and impotent up to Heaven, and after raising
 to sufficient, itinerant Joy, from conscious
 Fear and Guilt, state us there in our highest
 Happiness. That in the *Face* or Person of
Jesus Christ, as in a Mirror, we may all
with open Face behold the Honour and Glory
 of God, in the Illustration of all his Perfec-
 tions, the *Peace of God on Earth*, and *Good*
Will towards Men, in the Relief of all their
 Wants, and the Addition of all the Benefits
 they are either capable of wishing, or enjoying.

LIKE all the Works of God, so won-
 derful is the Divine Symmetry, so exceeding
 admirable and exact the Adjustment and Re-
 conciliation of the Powers of changeable
 peccant Mortals to the never changing At-
 tributes of God, by this *Medium*! Oh! that
 this imperfect, unpractis’d Pen could represent
 the hundredth Part of the adorable Wisdom,
 Goodness, and Beauty of this *Mediatorial*
 Vol. I. b Scheme,

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Scheme, it would every where be acknowledged to be as much beyond the Possibility of any human Invention, as it is above human Desert; and there would not be a *modern Deist* to be found of any Pretence to any Religion, but would fall down and worship, in the *Christian* Sense, his *Father* in Heaven, for so much Love in sending his Son into the World for the Salvation and Redemption thereof.

AND as this Connexion of Means and Ends, such as it is, is carry'd on in a Series to the Conclusion, as a regular Scheme ought to be, it is so much the more reasonable Request to the Reader, not to make a Judgment of any Part till he has perused the Whole; and when he thinks of Judgment, not to forget Mercy and proper Allowance to the first Essay that I know of, in this Kind. Perhaps, by the Way, some true Apprehensions may be settled, many Doubts relieved, and not a few Fears remov'd with respect to some important Things in Religion.

AND if the *true* Notion and Account of *Idolatry* is likewise laid down, the *Papist* will never be able to acquit himself of the Charge of it, without a Reformation. It is a melancholy Reflection, yet, What good Christian can help making it? That two the grossest Absurdities in the World, *POPERY*, and *DEISM*, should make a Progress in a learned, Protestant Country, the Bulwark of the Reformation, and of every valuable Liberty. But where-ever *Deism* increaseth, the other opportunity

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portunately enlarges its destructive Views, and facilitates its pestilent Purposes; because in serious sad Truth, they naturally and readily produce each other by the Elasticity of their innate Principles, as I have evidently shewn *.

THAT God should be in *Christ* reconciling the World to himself, and that *Man* should be taken into him, becoming the *Son of Man* in an extraordinary inconceivable Manner, as he was before *Son of God*, gives an Idea of the most *impartial, compleat, adequate* MEDIATOR, that can ever be thought of either by God, or Man; perfectly well agreeing with the Reason and Nature of Things, as it does with the Scriptures revealing them.

FOR this Cause, St. *John* very justly appeals, *He that believeth that Jesus* [the Son of Man] *is also the Son of God*, HAS THE WITNESS IN HIMSELF: provided he does but take it into the Consideration of his reasoning Mind, his Mind subscribes to the intrinsic Reasonableness, and is entirely satisfy'd in the Wisdom of *such* a Mediator in all the Aspects, in every Respect of God, and of Man; being so admirably founded in the Nature of Things, for completing the Reconciliation of Man to God, and God to Man, and bringing with it the most munificent intended Gift of God, *eternal Life*; which Life being *in his Son*, and given of God by him, is called *the Record that God gave of his Son*; (the greatest Record of an *entire Reconciliation*,

* Vol. II. 215. 238. See Vol. I. 119, 267. how very well they agree together.

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most undoubtedly, in all the World;) and *be that believeth it not*, [being so very reasonable and advantageous in itself] *maketh God a Liar*, to be neither good, holy, just, or wise; and *Jesus* to be no *Advocate* or *Mediator*.

THE Apostle 1 *John* v. 20. says, *we know the Son of God is come, and has given us an Understanding, that we may know him that is TRUE: and we are in him that is TRUE, even in his Son Jesus Christ*. Admitting *ἀληθινον* to refer to *παράκλητον*, Chap. ii. 1. preceding (which, I think, carries so plain and obvious a Connexion in the Apostle's Argument, that it must be admitted, as meaning the *true Advocate* or *Mediator*) his Conclusion is admirably strong and exactly beautiful, *this is true God, and eternal Life; little Children keep yourselves from Idols*. Because IDOLATRY, the Thing dissuaded from, consists in applying to *false Advocates* and *Mediators*, in Opposition, Neglect, or Ignorance of *Jesus Christ*, the *one, only true Mediator*.

NEITHER is the Divine Wisdom and Prudence in appointing this *only Mediator* in Exclusion of all others, designed in the least, to *inform* God of the State and Condition of Man, or *put him in Mind* of any of his Wants, or Miseries, as if he was wanting in *Disposition* to redress and save; but to give Life to the forlorn State of his unpractis'd Repentance, to direct and conduct his dejected Prayers, recover and re-admit him to Access and Intercourse with God in a *manner becoming*,

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coming, and through a *Medium* both adorning and softening the tremendous Majesty and Holiness of his Nature. How immediately and effectually does this Method convince Man of his own great Worthlessness by reason of his own manifold Sins, and of the great Odiousness of the same to God; and upon due Consideration, demonstrates that there can be no Approach to his pure spotless Nature, or any Forgiveness of Sin, in any other Method comparable to this?

BECAUSE this evinces, that any other Method, or any less Exuberance of Goodness and Mercy to the Sinner, though Goodness and Mercy are never so great in God, would be improvident, must needs be unjust to his other Attributes; as well as give Encouragement to that Disobedience to his Laws, and to that Opposition to his Glory and Designs, in consulting the general Happiness of Mankind, which is infinitely hateful in his Sight.

How clearly does this condescending Method instruct, argue him into, and convince him, if he will think at all, of the *true Nature* both of God, and Man? Of Man's great Ignorance of himself, at the same Time, of his necessary Dependence upon his Creator for the Knowledge of the true Way to his Favour, and of the best Means to his own Felicity; and of the ruinous Folly of conceited, independent, Sufficiency in pretending to an happy State, or to provide for himself, in Contempt of the Directions and Qualifications of the *Wisdom from above*, the Declarations and Conditions, which God (who made

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him in Innocence for Happiness, and would save him fallen into Sin, from himself enslaved to that, and Error, to *greater* Happiness) has graciously made known unto him?

FOR those Declarations are made known in the Way of *Covenant*, binding even God himself, and upon moderated Conditions, put into the Power of Man, under all his Frailty, to fulfil; and if *Jesus Christ*, who is *Man* as well as God, is the *Mediator* of that Covenant, and sees to the Performance on *both* Sides; can there be any Security for, Man's Happiness; Can there be any Alacrity to his careful Endeavours after it, to be thought of, to be named, to be compared to this righteously wise, this mercifully holy, this easy condescending Dispensation?—But I forbear;—an Introduction should not anticipate.

THE *Assurance* of Remission of Sins, and the Favour of God, considering how many Sins in Number, and of that Number not a few heinous in Degree of Iniquity, Men are foolishly guilty of against the Checks of their own Conscience; and at the same Time conscious, that their future Happiness, or Misery, most certainly depends upon their being forgiven, or not forgiven, is a Matter of the greatest Comfort and Importance, in the whole World, to every Man living; inasmuch as *well-being* in his principal Stage of Duration, is of infinitely greater Consequence than single Being, and mere Duration. It is a Dispensation of the most exquisite Wisdom, and in its several Parts and Branches of the most inestimable

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inestimable Beneficence of Goodness, and Beauty of Righteousness; that he who gave us Life and Reason, should condescend to engage himself in *Covenant*, to assure the Mind of Man by *Contract* and *Conveyance* of *Right*, of the Happiness of that Life in its everlasting State; upon Condition of obeying a reasonable Law suited to our rational Nature, using that Liberty he has given us according to the Direction of the Reason he first gave us, and again renew'd and reinforced upon us.

CHRISTIANITY, the *new* or *second Covenant*, being nothing else in its Revelation, (as is clearly demonstrated in the following Pages) but *superior extraordinary* Reason explicitly superadded to the *common* Reason given unto Man, which is that *first* or *old Covenant*, consciously obliging every one to an *universal* Obedience to the Law of *Works*, according to the plain Dictates of that cultivated Reason; superadded, I say, for the Relief of all the Misadventures, and Redemption of every Misfortune incurr'd by Man, in the State of his bounden Obedience to that Law of the first Covenant. And as every Man living is conscious of his failings, in disobeying that Law, yet firmly persuaded likewise of the Goodness of God to forgive him in *some* Manner, whoever, according to the Creed of Nature, believes him a *Rewarder of those that diligently seek him*; the unavoidable Transgression of that Law in Fact, and the infallible Holiness and Goodness of God in Theory, in a Manner discloses, and with the least Hint of Revelation, infers the Law of *Faith*, i. e. the *second Covenant*, or *Gospel*

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of the *Mediator*: and as well supposes the common Benefit of it to those who do not explicitly know it, as it deservedly excludes those from the Grace thereof, who knowingly reject it, and its Mediator.

YET, alas! so it is; ever since Sir *Isaac Newton* has banish'd the *open* Profession of *Atheism* by his incomparable Demonstration of *God and Order* in the Frame of the Universe, tho' the *Name* has been politickly chang'd, yet joining other Streams from the same Fountain of Evil, has occasion'd a prodigious Torrent of *Deism* to overflow this Age*. Wherein so many think it a Glory to their Names, and an Ornament to their free Spirit to be counted in *that* Profession; not desiring to have it thought that it was ever said of them, that they ever believed one Word of *Jesus Christ*. An Age! wherein the Notion of *Covenant and Mediator* is almost dropp'd in not a few modern Explanations of Christianity; notwithstanding the running Style and Title of *the New Testament*

* Mr. *Addison* in one of his excellent *Spectators* has observed, that "the *Atheist* has not found his Post tenable, and is therefore retir'd into *Deism*, and a Disbelief of Reveal'd Religion only: but the Truth of it is, the greatest Number of those Set of Men, are those who for want of a Virtuous Education, or Examining the Grounds of Religion, know so very little of the Matter in question, that their Infidelity is but another Term for their Ignorance." And a little after "If our Modern Infidels consider'd those Matters with that Candour and Seriousness which they deserve, we should not see them act with such a Spirit of Bitterness, Arrogance and Malice: They would not be raising such insignificant Cavils, Doubts, and Scruples, as may be started against every thing that is not capable of Mathematical Demonstration, in order to unsettle the Minds of the Ignorant, disturb the publick Peace, subvert Morality, and throw all Things into Confusion and Disorder."

in

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in their Hands, may, and in Truth ought to be translated, *NEW COVENANT*, as is plain in itself, and agreed by the Learned*. The New Covenant being the Source of God's Promises, as they are the Fountain of all Revelation, how can they, whose Characteristick it is to *bring out of their Treasure Things new and old*, find any other Divine Treasure but the *Old and New Covenant*, fruitful as it is of all Morality and Godliness, of all Edification in Knowledge and Practice, to bring their Things out of? Forasmuch as it is the only certain Standard for rectifying those vague Notions, and fond Theories of the *Goodness* of God, whereon the *modern Deists* erect their unhappy System, and from which they all strive, and always offer to maintain their self-deceiving Arguments, as I have abundantly shewn in the following Pages; and for removing many, if not most Mistakes likewise among Christians. And if bringing them thence would recover the Christian Religion to its primitive Use and Efficacy, Strength and Beauty, the too great Neglect of doing it, must necessarily, in Concurrence with other Causes, draw after it the hastning Decline (without the Vigilance of some to put a Stop, at this Crisis) of the true primitive Spirit and Notion, Obligation and Tendency of that most excellent, and above all others, incom-

* See Vol. i. p. 332. Instead of dividing the Bible into *Old and New Testament*, it might, with Submission, be more properly distinguish'd into *First and Second Vol. of the New Covenant*; and as the *Second Vol.* of the most valuable Writings does, or should exceed the *first*, in throwing most Light upon its Subject, so it is in the Sacred.

parable

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parable Religion ; according to that judicious Observation of Bishop *Burnet* in what he calls his *favourite Book* *. “ The being able “ to state the right Ground of our Hope, and “ Terms of Salvation, and having a clear and “ ready View of the *New Covenant* in *Jesus*, is of “ such absolute Necessity, that it is a pro- “ phaning of Orders, and defiling the Sanctuary, “ to bring any into it, who don’t rightly “ understand this Matter in its whole extent.”

It is too true, that the *Cross* of *Christ* and Redemption of the World by his *Blood*, tho’ the Center of all the Lines, and the glorious capital Subject both of the *Learners*, and the *Teachers* of the Religion of *Christ*, for purging the Conscience of every Christian from dead Works, runs at a very low Ebb, among those who are beholden to the Name, without having a true Apprehension, and a real Benefit of the *Thing*, Christianity. As formerly in natural Religion, the World, through *Wisdom*, *knew not God*, though the Works of Creation, the Ornaments of Heaven and Earth, so evidently and undeniably reveal’d him to the Mind of every Man ; nevertheless by a false Shew of being wise in an endless Variety of *foolish Imaginations*, they corrupted and changed the good Knowledge, to Ends and Designs quite contrary to Goodness : They *held the Truth in Unrighteousness* ; they brought into the Religion of the Means all Sorts of Superstition and Idolatry like an Inundation, carrying *Philosophers* down the Stream

* *Pastoral Charge*, 3d Edition, pag. 147.

with

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with the vulgar, and like the vulgar ; and with that a Flood of real Irreligion and Immorality. *For the devising of Idols was the beginning of Spiritual fornication, and the invention of them the Corruption of Life* †. So now, notwithstanding the Knowledge of *Jesus Christ*, the Mediator of the *New Covenant* between God and Man, together with the End and Purpose, Use and Application of what he has done, and still does for our Salvation, are clearly reveal’d, and particularly set down in Holy Scripture, as plain as Words can make them : And notwithstanding, since that ample Revelation at divers Times, and in different Manners, the Constitution of that Mediator, and of his Religion, might manifestly appear to the present wise Generation, zealously inquisitive after the *only true Religion*, to be founded upon the *exactest Fitness* every way, that Human Reason can possibly proportion to, and adjust by, the *true Nature of Things*, I mean the Nature of *God*, and the Nature of *Man*, as now truly and fully discovered to human Understanding, for making an impartial Judgment what is, and must be the only true Religion acceptable to God, and profitable to Man : perfectly suitable to the moral Aspect and Character of the former, as *Holy*, *Just*, and *Good* ; and no less suitable, whilst it is unspeakably beneficial to the latter, as a *frail*, *peccant*, *dependent* Creature. Nevertheless, by one ingenious Device or other, either being wise *above what is written*, or

* *Wisdom* xiv. 12.

short

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short of what is written; or not sufficiently considering and appealing likewise to the true Nature, moral, State, and Constitution of Things, knowable to the Reason of Man; the true Christianity, the most wise and admirable Religion of the Mediator Jesus Christ, is very much enervated of late, greatly dissipated and distanc'd from its true Intention, and generally frustrated of its best Effect and Comfort; but always has been rejected by the Deists from a Liveliness of Wit, Carelessness of Temper, Want of Reading, and Consideration, according to the Character given by a supposed Deist of King Charles II. "As to the King's Religion, it was more Deism than Popery; which he owed more to the Liveliness of his Parts, and Carelessness of his Temper than either to Reading, or much Consideration."*

FOR the better remedying and preventing this great Evil, the Charge and Advice of a most judicious Prelate, is particularly wise, and constantly necessary. "Though it is true, that one End of Christ's coming, was, to correct the false Glosses and Interpretations of the moral Law, and, in Consequence thereof, one End of his instituting a Ministry must be, to prevent the Return of those Abuses, by keeping up in the Minds of Men a true Notion of natural Religion, and a just Sense of their Obligations to the Performance of moral Duties; yet it is also true, that the main End of his coming, was to

* Buckingham's Works. T. II. page 75.

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"establish a new Covenant with Mankind, founded upon new Terms and new Promises; to shew us a new way of obtaining Forgiveness of Sins, and Reconciliation to God, and eternal Happiness; and to prescribe Rules of greater Purity and Holiness, by way of greater Degrees of Happiness and Glory. These (that is, the several Branches of what we may call the MEDIATORIAL SCHEME, with several Duties annex'd to, and resulting from each Branch) are, without doubt, the main Ingredient of the Gospel-State; those by which Christianity stands distinguish'd from all other Religions, and Christians are rais'd to far higher Hopes, and far greater Degrees of Purity and Perfection*.

IN Pursuance of this Plan the Author of these Sheets upon this his late Undertaking, judging it the best Inquest that can be proposed, and the only true Scent that can be followed after true Religion, has endeavoured, at this needful Season, to erect the Criterion, and display the solid Argument for correcting what is false, and establishing what is true, in appeal both to Reason, and Scripture; which are both in perfect Harmony, Concord, and Co-incidence, with respect to this true Religion. And so close is the Alliance between Natural Religion and Christianity, and so strong the Ratification and Accomplishment, that every

* Edmund Bishop of Lincoln's Charge at his primary Visitation, 1717. page 13. 14. This Passage reprinted. See the great Work of Redemption, Preface, page 5. Printed for Roberts, 1735.

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Argument against the last in its true uncorrupted State, though shifted never so many Ways, concludes against the first also; and whatever offers to destroy and undermine one, has the same vile Intention upon the other. Forasmuch as Christianity is the sole true Means for bringing the other to Perfection. False Wisdom will ever be forward in shewing its Inconsistency in creating a Misunderstanding between them, with as little real Concern for the End, as for the Means; whilst true Wisdom that comes down from above, will distinguish itself in rightly valuing, and assiduously applying the one to the other.

AND because the *modern Deists* are excessively jealous of, and vehemently oppose every thing that looks like *arbitrary*, or *mere Will* in Religion; rightly enough imagining, that there neither is, nor can be any *Criterion* fix'd for finding out an *arbitrary Will* of God; and that the understanding and unfolding Things of that Nature, has no more to do with human Reason, than Sounds has to do with our Eyes, or Colours with our Ears; it may be justly and generally concluded by all Christians, that Christianity will never appear to *Them* to be that true Religion, or reasonable Service, till its *peculiar, instituted* Parts are shewn to be likewise laid in Reason, and grounded in the Nature of Things, wisely and purposely *appointed* for repairing and fortifying our moral and obedient Powers, to make them more recipient of the Likeness, and Blessing of God.

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THIS will incontestably appear with respect to the Two *Sacraments, Baptism*, and the *Lord's Supper*; that they are additional, personal Securities, and Progresses in our Attachment to the *Mediator* of the New Covenant; enter'd, and often recogniz'd, for the more solemn recruiting *Repentance* and *Prayer*, the natural languishing Religion of the Means, with all the Vigor and Efficacy, Consolation and Zeal, that are requisite for carrying on the Religion of the End, or natural Religion, to due Perfection. For, as the Dispensation of the Mediator is granted and displayed by way of *Covenant*, some *external Rites* were requisite, some *solemn Actions* became necessary to be required on the Part of the *Mediator* of it, both for religiously initiating into, and continually preserving a religious Communication with that Mediator; and for *recognizing* that Covenant, and *remembering* the Mediator of it in a solemn Manner, as often as the frail Condition of Human Obedience requires: How frivolous and thoughtless, without the least Ground, or Grievance, are the Outcries of those *Opposers* in Conversation, and Writing? Unless it is a Grievance to be tied too strictly, and in good earnest, to perform the Religion of Nature, their so much pretended Glory and Boast, by any new *acquired* Engagement or Covenant, and that often *recognized* and *reflected* upon in the most solemn Manner and Season; and both morally operating: first binding; and then rousing, instigating and obliging the

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insensible Conscience, and the forgetful Honour of the Gentleman to be true to his *Promise* and *Engagement*, for doing what is every way his Interest, as well as Duty to do and perform, with all Sincerity. Besides answering their Objections, the true Notion of those Sacraments may be the more seasonable in the midst of so many different Opinions and Disputes: And if the *Deist* cannot but approve of them in their *true Use* and Purpose, every body else will delight in the same, with the greater Satisfaction to the Reason of his own Mind.

AND if that *Complaint* of increasing, instead of lessening the Number of *Deists* by the *Weakness* of *some* Attacks upon Infidelity, is punctually endeavour'd to be obviated, by going deeply and thoroughly to the *Root* of the Evil, in the ensuing Treatise; the learned Readers will have the greater Reason to connive at lesser Faults; and if others, perchance, meet with any valuable, unheeded Truths, which serve to rectify Misapprehensions and Mistakes both in Natural Religion, and Christianity, to thank God for making the Author (sensible as he is of his own Infirmities) the happy Instrument of putting him in mind of them. To whose Blessing the Perusal of what follows is committed.

SEE the Reason of altering the inward running Title, *Deism Delineated*, in the *Appendix*, p. 7.

Instead of a Catalogue of their Names, the few Subscribers are desired to accept of Thanks for their Encouragement.

THO' this Edition contains Seven Sheets more than the first, it is afforded at the same Price, for the Good of the Publick. CHAP.



CHAP. I.

The Religion of the END.

THE Existence of God being granted, the first Question is, What is Religion? The Force and Power of Religion*, whence it derives, imports a strong Obligation, which the Author of our Being has bound upon us; and which we tie and bind the faster upon our own Observance, by taking it upon ourselves, as we grow up to years of Discretion; and growing more and more sensible of its obliging Power, and of the Reasonableness of our Compliance, it becomes a mutual kind of Covenant. To know the Original of the Religion of the End, or what Ends we were made to answer, in being made rational, sociable, accountable Creatures, conscious of Obligation and Duty, we must have recourse to the Frame and Constitution of Things: There we find, from the first Creation, the three great Originals and Objects of duty and obedience.

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THE

* Religionis nomen a religando, & a vinculo pietatis esse deductum; quod hominem sibi Deus religaverit, & pietate constrinxerit: quia servire nos ei ut Domino; et obsequi ut patri necesse est, Lact. &c. Lib. IV. cap. 28. Cicero derives it from Relego, Qui

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THE Religion of the *End* is infallibly true and certain, and as old, indeed, as the Creation; because the God of our Nature presents us with nothing but what really exists*; and the mutual Relation between Him, the rest of Mankind, and Ourselves, will as infallibly shew itself to our reflecting Reason, as the Things themselves; and the mutual Respect and Care of, Engagement to, and Alliance general with each other, thence resulting, cannot be hid†. That which preserves this Relation, is Order, or Law, to last as long, and be as invariable, as the Relation itself. The Authority which enforces the Law, is his who

Qui autem omnia, quæ ad cultum Deorum pertinerent, diligenter pertractarent, & tanquam relegerent, sunt dicti religiosi ex relegendo. Lib. II. de nat. deor. viz. To read over and over, study, ponder much, and consider attentively the Grounds and Reasons of Piety and Virtue, and so effectually, to the Purpose, as to apply all the Means, Motives, and Helps in our Power for acquitting ourselves of the Duty owing both to the End and the Means, of Religion. To neglect both the End and the Means, is a State of *Irreligion*; to intend the End, and despise the Means, a State of *Deistical* Sufficiency and Contumacy; to prefer the Means to the Neglect of the End, a State of *Superstition* and *Enthusiasm*: each of them offend against the *true State* of Things, not considering them as they *really* are. Whilst *true Religion*, which is therefore true, because it regards Things in their true Nature, and intended Use and Application, as made known unto us, consists in the Opposite of the first, and obviously distinguishes itself to be, and act in a *Medium* between the other two. Or, in other Words, in the sincere Application of the Means in order only to the End, and in the conscientious Attainment of the End, by and through the Use of the Means.

* In this Respect, *nunquam aliud natura, aliud sapientia dicit.* Which may be thus paraphras'd: If we follow Nature, we are in the Road to the Wisdom that Nature teaches: the Reason of Things is the Voice of Nature; and that Voice is the Will of the Creator of Nature.

† *Lex Deo orta, suo jure nata.* Or in the Scripture language everlasting Righteousness.

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fashioned them as they are; his Will and Wisdom in enacting, and our Homage in obeying, are as apparent, as that he is our Creator, and we his Creatures. To follow or resist the Reason and Relation of Things, is therefore the same thing as to follow, or resist God. In short, the Relations we were made to fulfil, or the Religion of the End, which was in the Beginning, is now, and ever shall be, are contained in these three noted Branches; our Duty and Care towards GOD; our NEIGHBOUR; OURSELVES.

To observe and keep these in the Perfection of our original Nature, according to its Law and Order, and to conform our Will to the Divine Will, behaving as becomes us in these Respects, is to will and chuse like God, and so imitating his *moral* Attributes, partake of the Divine Nature, and exhibit that *moral* Image of him to the World, *homo homini Deus*. If we were made in the *Image* of God, as his Revelation affirms, the glory, beauty, and perfection of an Image consists in the nearest *Resemblance* to its Original; and the several Lights of those Beauties and Perfections shining in Man's Conversation, is the *glorifying* our Father, our Original in Heaven. The several Commands for intending and acting every thing to his *Glory*, are so many Directions for the imitating Nature of Man to be found copying after him; the Precepts and Recommendations for *Perfection*, are so many Injunctions for improving in Attitude of action, and Similitude of disposition. And for us, who ought to make some similar Return of the Benefit we so largely enjoy, to be perfect in our Conduct to *our* Enemies, as he is perfect towards us, *his* Enemies, is, perhaps, the finishing Stroke of that moral Image. *God is Love* to all Men in this World, therefore

CHAP. I. Hatred to any Man can be no right Image of him in any Person. The glorifying the Just, yet Merciful exercise of his Authority, belongs to a particular Image of him, Governors and Magistrates. This is the Law of Nature written in the Heart of Man, i. e. as plain to be read and learned of GOD, as if written there. For what is said 1 *Thes.* iv. 9. of that Relation, which is the Ground of brotherly Love, that Men submitting to him in such Things, are taught of GOD θεοδιδαντοι, and elsewhere, the Neglector of such Relation to be worse than an Infidel, may, in a lesser degree, be affirmed of the Observance of the other Relations; the Conscience bearing witness to them, accusing the transgression, as Sin; and approving the performance, as Duty. And for every one to find out whether his actions, respecting his Neighbour, are conformable to this Law of Nature, upon any Doubt arising, the ready Rule to decide it, is to put ourselves in his Stead and Circumstances; and sincerely ask our Heart what we expect to be done, or omitted by him to us: then we clearly and immediately see without Passion or Self-love, the Law of action, or Forbearance of action due towards our Neighbour, conspicuously and sensibly written in our own Heart, and consequently in every other Heart of Man. This is a Rule of Conscience that never fails, and is always ready at hand.

I. DUTY to GOD, comprehends our Obedience to all his known Commands, as our Ruler and Governor. Adoration of his natural Perfections, freed from all degrading Opinions, what he certainly is not; Esteem and Reverence of his Name and Excellencies; Imitation of his moral Attributes; Love of him as the Fountain of all Good;

CHAP. I. Good; Trust, as all Powerful, and True, Thank-giving, as our Preserver and Benefactor; Fear, as the Inspector and Judge of our Behaviour; all which are a collective Honour and Worship arising out of the aforesaid Relation, and due unto him of Right*.

II. DUTY to our NEIGHBOUR, is observed in social Justice; universal Benevolence; and particular Relative Duties, as we happen to be placed in the World.

III. DUTY to, or Care of OURSELVES, consists in the due Government of our Appetites and Passions; in the Knowledge of ourselves, our Faculties, and Opportunities; that we are rational, sociable, and accountable Creatures; wherein our Happiness consists; what is our Good, and what is our Evil; on whom we depend; for what we were made; what Care we ought to take of our Mind, and of our Body, not only for our own Sake, but with Respect to those who have an Interest in us, God, our Neighbour, our Posterity; Diligence, Prudence, guard against Temptations, &c.

ALL these are the Religion of the End, obligatory upon Man as he came out of the hands of his Maker, Rational, Sociable, Accountable. Had all human Race been in Paradise, they were bound by a Law that altereth no otherwise, than as the Reason and Relation of Things alter, to all these Observances; and to have been faithful in the Discharge would have been Innocence, Happiness, Paradise; the performance of that natural Law was sure of meeting with God's Appro-

* Quid aliud est pietas quam justitia adversus Deos. Cic.

CHAP. I. bation; the neglect of it with his Displeasure.

Who, for that purpose, will take an exact Account of every Man's Works; to reward those who diligently seek his Favour in doing these Duties, and consequently punish the Transgressor.

THIS Religion of the End, together with the natural Religion of the Means, (very early springing up out of the State and Nature of Things, as soon as the Primitive Pair were changed from what they were, and lapsed from their Primitive, to a new, *accessory* State; wherein all their Posterity, like themselves, are left *frail* and *peccant*) make up that State of natural Righteousness, by which some, how many to God only known, in all Nations of this many Kindom'd-Earth have been, and shall be accepted of that God, *who is no Respector of Persons*. So everlasting is this moral Law, that our Lord assures, *till Heaven and Earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfill'd*. He himself was the grand Means for redintegrating Obedience to it; and therefore says of himself, *He came not to destroy, but to FULFIL*; and infers to all others, *whoever shall break one of these least Commandments of that Law, and shall teach Men so, shall be least, accounted least by him, in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whoever shall do, and teach them, shall be called great in the said Kingdom*.

"THERE is this Difference (says a great Prelate) between the eternal Laws of Justice and Righteousness, and all positive Laws whatever; That as to the first we are made for them, and the nearer we do in all Things conform to them, the more noble, and lovely, and excellent Creatures we are; but as to positive Laws, they are all made for us; and the more they conform to us, the more they obviate all our
"Wants

"Wants and Difficulties, the more they answer
"to all our Necessities, the better they are." CHAP. I.

NOW God governing by the Nature of the Things he made, or in the Style of the *Author of Christianity as old as the Creation*, "as he governs
"all Things according to their Nature," *pag. 14*. it was requisite that even Paradise itself, the State he had placed them in, should be a State also of their *own Choice* and Consent*, depending as much upon their Behaviour, as on his Goodness; and owe his continuance in Paradise and Happiness as much to himself, as he owed his first Situation there to his Maker. Had he made them any Promise, to superintend them so, as they should never make a *wrong* Choice, that would have destroyed the very Thing he distinguish'd their Nature by; that *Choice* being the greatest Privilege Man is capable of, without it, there could neither be human Virtue, nor human Nature: Therefore having made the first Pair of our Race moral Agents, he gave them not a Property in themselves; because he ordain'd them *accountable* to himself, by giving them such a Power over their own Persons and Actions, which is their Liberty; for the right or wrong Use whereof, they were answerable to him. Life and Death moreover were laid before them, as motives to fix their Choice, and preserve their Liberty, as well as all their other Faculties, in the same Uprightness they received them from his Hands.

FOR a Trial and Probation of them, in particular, how well they would obey their Maker, and advise with, and *depend* upon him their sure experienced Friend, in all Exigencies and Occurrences that could befall them in their dependent

* *Invitum qui servat, idem facit occidenti*, Hor. de Art. Poet.

CHAP. I. State of Probation; from *him* they came to the good Knowledge, who they were, and where they were, and to what purpose were; having no Experience, they knew not so much as what was safe to eat for the Preservation of their Being; they depended upon the *Creator* of their every Faculty, and its Object for that obliging Knowledge; from *him* they had the sweet Knowledge of conjugal Love, the Source of human Race, and of Endearments more than Father or Mother; from *him* they had the pleasing safe Knowledge of their Sovereignty over the World, and undisputed Dominion over Creatures stronger than both of them together; from *him* they received, divine Gift! The Knowledge of Language, instantly infused for joint praise of God, and social communication of Good from all Things, then so good as to be freed from any Evil; and therefore not to be perverted in plotting against God, or any foolish Knight-Erantry after Evil. They should have better considered in what they were going to transgress, the Generations to come, interested in those Things; *after the Seed of Evil was once sown in the Hearts of the first Progenitors, how much ungodliness it would bring forth until the time of threshing come.* If that *restraint* of Knowledge was no more in effect than *Know thy self*, and thy duteous Dependence as for Happiness, so for the Knowledge thereof, they might foresee what after ignorance and false opinions of *Self*, must be the penal consequence of their irregular transgression of *that* Boundary. There was no envy of, no complaint of any Restraint of their Liberty from any *pure* good; a Restraint therefore of their Liberty to *Evil* was very gracious; and such as God prescribed to himself; and, consequently, the Restraint

CHAP. I. straint from the *Knowledge* of Evil should have been judged most happy for them, who knew not their own strength, after an Experiment for that Knowledge. They knew *him* certainly the *Giver*, as of all Things, so of *all* Knowledge, and the Source whence to seek their wisdom without upbraiding: That was rational Armour, and Admonishment sufficient to have preserved them disinclin'd to, and clear of surprise from every curious, suspicious, interdicted Knowledge, offered from any alien Quarter, whatever. They *knew* Death collectively in prospect, a sure consequence of Displeasure, from the sense of its contrary Life, which they were very sure, owed its beginning and constant dependance on his Pleasure, and therefore more and more resolute to have *depended* upon *him* for the Knowledge of all *other* Good and Evil, and not to offer to set up for themselves, undutifully to attain an *independent* State of Knowledge and Happiness; which has occasioned, ever since, such a Want, Curiosity, and Perplexity about it.

AND to prove to themselves the Strength of the reason, and the Freedom of will imparted to them, for governing their then unprejudic'd Appetites, it seemed necessary to lay them under some *particular* Restraint, plain and monumental to their Reason, that their then Paradise and Happiness was a *dependent* State of Knowledge and Happiness by a solemn Prohibition, not to eat of *such* a Tree, called the Tree of Knowledge of GOOD and EVIL; because the eating of that forbidden Fruit through any Temptation, would certainly bring them to the Knowledge, who is the Origin and Fountain of all their *Good*, and who the Fautor and Promoter of their *Evil*. There being this difference between a positive Command

CHAP. I. Command to do such a Thing, and a *Prohibition* to forbear; that the former depends upon Opportunity to put it in practice, whilst it is always in the Agent's Power to abstain, with respect to the latter. It seems, therefore, fitting that some such Test of obedience as that, should have been covenanted with, and established upon them, at their first setting out in the World. As there was then no more of their *Species* in being, the Trial could not have been in the Duty, or Relation to our *Neighbour*; it must therefore be in that Relation between God and Man, both ascending and descending. And this particular Prohibition was an effectual Proof of obedience with respect to that principal Relation. And because a *Covenant*, this being called in Scripture the *first Covenant*, supposes a *preceding Law*, and has Reference to it: As *Adam* could not but perceive the Fitness of the Law of his Nature, and likewise the Fitness of that explicit Prohibition, in order to his *Probation*, from the Relation and Circumstances he was placed in, he must needs *consent* to, and approve of the Reasonableness of both, and of his bounden Obedience; which made the Covenant, in effect, *mutual*. *Ecclus. xiv. 17.* refers to this *first Covenant*, affirming *the Covenant from the beginning was, thou shalt die the death*. Therefore the immutable moral Law of obeying, loving, fearing, and living in a *creaturely* Dependence upon the Creator; and the moral Law moreover for restraining *irregular* Appetites, for taking care of *ourselves*, our Mind, and Body, and Posterity, interposed their several Obligations, to have prevented Disobedience and Sin.

It is therefore a great mistake to say, there was no *Morality* in this Trial: When *all* the morality

CHAP. I. rality then in a manner in the World was put upon a Test, and brought to the Touchstone. For the due Obedience to that previous trying Command of God, and the Government of our Appetites and Passions, was the Test and Trial of all future Obedience to the moral Laws of God; *to perform acceptable faithfulness, Ecclus. xv. 15.* was the end of his being left in the Hands of his own Counsel, whether he would continue upright, or fall from his Maker, and fail in his Faithfulness, by Disobedience; or, as *2 Esd. iii. 7.* expresses it, *unto him [Adam] thou gavest Commandment to love thy way; which he transgressed, and immediately thou appointedst death in him, and in his generation. The first Adam, ver. 21, 22, bearing a wicked heart, transgressed, and was overcome; and so be all they that are born of him. Thus infirmity was made permanent; and the law (also) in the Heart of the people with the malignity of the root; so that the good departed away, and the evil abode still.* But if our first Parents would not keep themselves upright in that, they could not afterwards live in exact Uprightness with respect to the moral Law of their Nature. If *he that offends in one Point is guilty of all*, he that breaks through the Test of all obedience, must certainly be guilty of the most heinous Transgression. Therefore there was a moral Fitness, not capricious Arbitrariness in that Prohibition; especially if the Tree itself (as some have thought) had a natural intoxicating Evil in it. Besides, as there was to be Virtue in forbearing such as entitled to Life, it was further necessary that there should be a Temptation, and a Tempter, without which there can be no Virtue. There was no Tempter but the Devil; he, who was the first self-tempted and self-depraved, became the Tempter and Depraver

CHAP.

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prayer of others; and in that State of Things, replenished and adorned with *all good*, there could be no Temptation but that of more Knowledge, a curiosity of *knowing Evil*, as well as good: Yet beforehand they could not but positively know, it must be wrong, and therefore *Evil*, to transgress the pointed-out Proof of Gratitude, Faith, and Allegiance due to their Maker and sole Benefactor; but they must needs from the Suggestions of Sense contrariant to Reason *feel Evil* under the forbidden Mask of Good! It should not therefore seem the most unaccountable Thing to our Author, *pag.* 351, 352. that God does permit such a subtle Spirit to tempt Mankind; since his Power is restrained from hurting, and is always converted to the Advantage of those who duly submit themselves to God. And indeed the Strength of the Tempter, in shaking and sifting Virtue, consists chiefly in drawing Men to Sins of Commission against a *prohibitory* Law, more than to Sins of Omission against an affirmative Commandment*.

T H U S

* The poor Plenty of Wit he shews in deriding this most ancient sacred History, *pag.* 349. is acting the low Part of a Merry-Andrew, rather than a serious Writer upon so serious a Subject. Though it is true, "That *your Ridicule*, if ill placed at first, will certainly fall at last where it deserves;" yet as an Inquiry after true Religion is the most serious, rational Concern in the World, nothing but a grave, serious, rational Treatment can become it; or prove whether the Inquirer is in earnest, or *jest*. "Grimace and Tone are Helps only to Imposture." To use the Words of the Author of *Characteristicks*, Vol. I. *pag.* 75. To start Questions, or manage Debates which offend the publick Ear, is to be wanting to that Respect which is due to the common Society. Such Subjects should either not be treated at all in publick, or in such a Manner, as to occasion no Scandal or Disturbance. The Publick is not, on any Account, to be laugh'd to its Face; or

CHAP.

I.



T H U S Sin entered into the World, and a new Thing being arisen in it, which was not before, a new Name must be given to the Agent, which is that of *Sinner, Transgressor*. Here began the great Change in our moral World; Man fallen from Innocence, and a constant bent and inclination to it, to actual Transgression, and a Proneness to future Iniquity and new Evil! There is the old approbation of Goodness, but not the old *Inclination*. A preceding *Proneness* and *Inclination* to *Good*, and a free Capacity of preferring it always, and persevering continually therein, was that glorious *moral* Image wherein God made Man upright; the nearest Resemblance that a mutable,

so reprehended for its Follies, as to make it think itself contemned. And what is contrary to good Breeding is, in this respect, contrary to Liberty. If it is imprudent to lose a Friend for the Sake of a Jest, what Wit is there in losing Heaven? The pretended Politeness of the Ridicule, is only setting a finer Edge upon the Tool, which excuses not the Author's ill Intention, of rendering that contemptible, which, in the Nature of Things, and in the Opinion of all thinking Persons, ought to be out of the Reach of such unworthy Treatment. Bishop *Sprat* has finely observed, that *Raillery* does not always agree well with the Temper of our *Nation*; which as it has a greater Courage than to suffer *Derision*, so it has a firmer Virtue, than to be wholly taken up about deriding of others. Such Men are therefore to know, that all things are capable of abuse from the same Topicks, by which they may be commended; they are to consider that Laughter is the easiest and slenderest fruit of *Wit*—He afterwards from one of the *Antients*, calls such Mirth, *humanis Bacchari rebus*, *Hist.* of *R. S.* *pag.* 418. And I would observe, that as nothing by publick Allowance will bear to be the Subject of Ridicule, but what well becomes to be the Subject of *Satire*, these sort of Authors quite mistake their Object, unseasonably expose their inward Sense of things, and lose both their Character and their Wit. For as a weak Mind is easily imposed upon by others; so a ridiculing Mind imposes upon itself without any recompence, but the poor satisfaction of making other People merry at the expence of deceiving themselves.

imitating,

CHAP. I. imitating, intelligent Creature could be framed to its Maker. *He endued them with strength from themselves, and made them according to his Image,* Ecclus. xvii. 3. But after Adam was so altered by Transgression, and the Image of God perverted and inverted in him, he was no longer company for God; and the Son that he begot in *his own Image*, as it is affirmed (and so from Generation to Generation) was doubtless, like him, altered and corrupted in Tendency of Inclination, and approved of Evil as well as Good; which is a frequent Sense of *knowing* in Scripture. That that was the original Constitution of human Nature in the *Image* of God, before Government and Magistracy entered, (another Sort of Image of him) seems very plain, because when we are renewed in the Spirits of our Minds, and created after God in Righteousness and true Holiness, it is called the *new Creature*, and the *Divine Nature*, and the *Image* of God; and the exceeding great and precious Promises were designed to make us Partakers of that Nature. That there was a *Warp* contracted towards Evil, and a *Crookedness* from the right Way, appears from the saying of the Forerunner, *I am the Voice, crying, make strait the Way of the Lord.*

PASSIONS and Appetites, which before were submissive, weak, and in the dependent condition of Servants, became insolent, craving, and striving for the Mastery; and, being gratify'd once, not only expect, but demand and clamour to be so always. Reason became weaker in its Authority and Rule, and very imperfectly submitted to: The Understanding, which before was fallible, grew feebler in its Discernment, and subjected to many Prejudices. The Liberty of Will was captivated by Irregularities, and too much

CHAP. I. much enslaved to Deviations. Death, with its innumerable concomitants, Disorders and Diseases, took its post about their Constitution, and like a Sword over their Heads, hung over them and their enjoyments, making all the after-life of them, and their Posterity, subject to the bondage of corruption; according to the Letter, that very Day they eat thereof, they were both dead in Law. The delicious Fruits of the Earth, which were so plenteous and spontaneous before, were now to be extorted out of it by the torture of Spades, &c. and the Sweat of Man's Limbs. The benign Air and other Elements changed for the worse, and grew into disorder like Man; his Mind was clouded, and so was the Sky. In short, the whole Constitution became altered, and so alter'd, transmitted to Posterity. For *who can bring a clean Thing out of an unclean? O thou Adam, what hast thou done? For though it was thou that sinnedst, thou art not fallen alone, but we all that come of thee, &c.* 2 Esd. vii. 48. Now granting the derivation of Mankind from one Original Pair; which our Author, after such an universal satisfying Discovery from Revelation, could not have had the Assurance to deny in earnest, either as a Philosopher, a Moralist, or Civilian: It is demonstrable from two self-evident Notions, that there must have been a State of primitive Innocence, as well as there is now a State of Sin, Frailty, and Disorder.

First, If it is a self-evident Notion, (our Author, pag. 3, 7, 49, and abundantly of Places, admits the Conclusiveness of this argument, and triumphs in it, with respect to Religion proceeding from God) that God is *all-perfect* in Wisdom, Goodness, Power; it follows, that his *Handy-work,*

CHAP. I. *work, especially his own Image, must first proceed from him perfect and compleat, lacking nothing; being the Θεὸς ἑνικός presiding over the little, and great World subjected to him under God. That the Body, and Soul (the latter consisting of Life and Spirit) being called together and united in the Constitution of an human, intelligent, free Agent; their several Properties were proportioned to each other, and adjusted in order, according to their Use and Dignity; and so united in Action by all the laws of Harmony, as might best adorn, and render such an Union most enjoyable. That all the Faculties were perfect and entire in their kind; the Understanding seeing with its Eye the natural Perfections of God, and his Creatures, and the natural Law of Obligations flowing from the Relations and Habitudes of the moral World, as clearly as the Eye of the Body perceived outward Objects; the Will unbiased in its Liberty, exactly poised, and inclined to obey any Command of its Maker; the Passions at their several Posts, to meet and entertain their Objects; the Law of the Members all submissive to their Leader. Whence follows, in a natural inseparable Result, for some time of Life at least, a State of Innocence, Order, and Harmony; sufficient to have constituted a Paradise in any Place, had there not been a particular local one for their Entertainment.*

Secondly, It is a self evident Truth, and Matter of Fact, felt by every Man, and complained of by most Moralists with a Sort of Wonder; that a State of Disorder, Weakness, and Unconstancy has, from the most ancient Complaints, confirmed by the Experience of every Age, seized all the Faculties of Man. Many of the Heathen Philosophers

CHAP. I. Philosophers were so sensible of this universal Depravation of Soul, and Degeneracy from the divine Life and Original of our Being, that they invented the *Hypothesis* of the Pre-existent State of Souls, in order to solve it; by acquitting God from being the Author of it, and imputing it to the Demerit of Sin in some former State, imagining this bodily Life to be the Prison and Punishment of the Soul for those Crimes. It has been Man's general Observation and Complaint of himself in all Places, that he often does what he approves not in his Mind*; that some old

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C

Leaven

* *Video meliora proboque; deteriora sequor.* Arrian Epist. Lib. II. cap. 26. *Arist. Eth.* Lib. I. cap. 13. III. 4. *Seneca* has many, and *Tully* some of these Complaints. The Chinese Philosopher *Confucius's* Morals, pag. 21, 23. declares the Integrity of Man to have been a Present from Heaven, and that it was his Endeavour to re-establish it; but that the *Holy Man was in the West*, in quest of whom one of the Emperors sent Ambassadors, A. D. 65. who landing in one of the Islands near the Red-Sea met with the Idol of *Fohi*, contented themselves with that, carried it back to *China*, which has establish'd *Idolatry* and *Atheism* ever since. But above all Heathens, *Plato* is as particular as if he had read the Scriptures; he says, in *Critica*, "the Divine Nature once flourish'd in Man, but Man prevail'd against it, from which Fountain came all our Evils." In his *Polit.* "That the Nature and Condition of Man has been changed for the worse, and a prodigious Ungovernableness has invaded Mankind, and that weak Men, deprived of their Guardian, are every where devour'd by the wild Beasts of their Passions." In *Leg.* Lib. V. That this great Evil is innate, *ἐμφυτον*; when Men indulge themselves in it, they find no Remedy to free themselves. He calls this Malignity of Nature *κακοφυία*. And in *Timeo* ingenuously confesses, *that our Nature was corrupted in the first of our Race, ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ*. And *Rep.* VII. derives the Ignorance of Man from that Source. And his Scholar *Aristotle* most acutely demonstrates *Ignorance* to be the Cause of all Sin. *Eth.* Lib. III. cap. 1. And in a Book of *Tully* now lost, *In libro tertio de Republica Tullius*, hominem dicit, non ut à matre, sed ut à novercà naturâ editum in vitam, corpore nudo, fragili

CHAP. I. Leaven works a *Nititur in vetitum*, an Inclination to what is forbidden; or, in Scripture-Language, the *corruptible Body presseth down the Soul*, the *Law of the Members struggles against the Law of the Mind*; and too often, though most preposterously, gets the Ascendant. In many Things we offend all of us: If we say we have no Sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. I am carnal, sold under Sin; that which I do, I allow not; what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I*. If this is the true Condition, and present Circumstance of Man, it undeniably follows, that a great Change for the worse must have been introduced into the moral State of our Nature, from what it was in its Original: And as that Change must have proceeded either from God, or Man; it being shewn before, it could not have the former for its Author, it remains, that it must derive from the latter, as its Fountain. The unchangeable God had no farther

gili et infirmo, animo autem anxio ad molestias, humili ad timores, molli ad labores, prono ad libidines; in quo tamen inest tanquam obrutus quidem divinus ignis ingenii et mentis. St. August. Lib. IV. contra Julian, cap. 12. N. 60.

* Rom. vii. 14, 15. Our Author, pag. 221. makes a very spiteful Insinuation from these last Words, as spoke in his own Person, to reflect upon the Apostle as a very wicked Person, whilst he was in that Office; and every where most injudiciously, or against his Conscience, quits the Meaning, catches at the Sound of Words, to gratify his Spleen in aspersing the Holy Scripture. Though the Words run in his own Person, they are certainly meant, and can only be true, of the corrupted natural Man; and the unregenerated Jew, described in several preceding Chapters: That he chose that Method of Expression, was owing to his Knowledge of human Nature, and his great Skill in addressing those he spoke, or wrote to. See more Instances of the like inoffensive Way of Address of this Apostle, Rom. vii. 24, 25. iii. 7. 1 Cor. x. 21, 29. Eph. ii. 3. 1 Cor. i. 12. compared with Chap. iv. 6.

Hand

Hand in it, than by permitting, as became him, his free, changeable Creature Man to act according to his Nature, and make Use of the Liberty he had entrusted him with, at his own Discretion. CHAP. I.

Now, if this mighty Alteration came to pass, our Author must either have accounted for it according to the *Mosaical History* of the Fall of our first Parents, or have produced some other History and Account of it. But he is accountable to, and very culpable before all his Readers, in particular, for the grand Fallacy, the *πρώτον ψεύδος* of his whole Book; for establishing as a Principle, and every where repeating it as the *scientifick Premise* he adheres to, for all his Inferences against Revelation in general, and Christianity in particular; viz. * “That a Religion absolutely perfect (meaning the Law of Nature immediately established by God at the very first Creation, issuing out of the Relations of Things then made, as he every where † explains himself) admits of no Alteration; nor is capable of Addition, or Diminution, must be as *immutable* as the Author of it. Revelation therefore can add nothing to a Religion thus absolutely perfect, universal and immutable.”

AGAIN, “Religion thus founded on these immutable Relations, must at all Times, and in all Places, be alike *immutable*; since external Revelation not being able to make any Change in these Relations, and the Duties that necessarily result from them, can only recommend and inculcate these Duties; except we suppose, that God at last acted the Tyrant, and imposed such Commands, as the Relations

* Pag. 3, 49, 52.

† Pag. 17, 51, 54, 166, 385.

CHAP. I. "we stand in to him, and one another, no ways require;" pag. 166. Again, he has the Assurance to put the Question, contrary to Fact and Experience; "Will any affirm that the Nature of Man is changed? Or that the Relations God and Man stand in to one another, are not always the same?" pag. 385. But this mighty Reasoner, who deduces the Immutability of his Religion from the *Immutability* of the Relation between God and Man, ought surely to have consider'd better, whether Man, the descending Part of the Relation, is as *immutable* as God: Was he indeed made so, his Conclusion would have been infallible; but, as it happens, that God is only wise and immutable, and Man otherwise, it has just so much Truth in it, and no more, than one manifest Falshood following from another. For upon the first Commencement of the above-mentioned Change, a *new* Relation commenced between God and Man, which subsisted not before: between an *Offender* and *Offended*, a *Law-giver* and a *Sinner*, a *Governor* and a *Rebel*; and out of that Relation arose a *new Regard and Interposition* on God's Part; and on Man's, *new Obligations and Duties*, neither of which were before.

OUR Author, pag. 91. allows, "To alter one's Conduct, as Circumstances alter, is not only an Act of the greatest Prudence and Judgment, but is consistent with the greatest Steadiness." How then will it impeach God of Changeableness, when upon such a Change in Man, he is still as steady to his Happiness, in a Way suitable to that Alteration, as he was at the first creating him? A Revelation from God does not therefore make him *mutable*, as he says, pag. 51. nor does it change the Relations Things,

CHAP. I. Things, whereon Man's Duty is founded; but supposes them to *have been* changed by Man, as the Foundation of its Expediency. Nor does the Christian Revelation shew him a Tyrant in any of his Commands, being all directed to the fulfilling that Duty, which results from the original Nature of Things, as Man is capable of performing. The very character and encomium of the *Perfection* of the Law of God governing a changeable, and changed Man, instead of consisting in *Immutability*, is founded in its *actual Change*, corresponding to the Change in Man: because in this respect it may attain its End, and so be perfect; but in the other, it could never after attain its End of perfect Obedience, and therefore must be imperfect, as a Law requiring it: And consequently must be susceptible of such *Alterations* and *Additions* from the interposing Favour of God, making such Provisions in his Revelation, as shall enable Man to perform it, to his own Happiness, and the Glory of the Divine Acceptance. And, as it admits of *Addition* on the side of Favour to Man's Condition, so does it of *Diminution* on the same Side, in not exacting the *rigid* Obedience that was due before.

IF therefore this Change is an undeniable Matter of Fact, the *Religion of Nature delineated* has observed, with respect to any Truth, "Not to own Things to be what they are, is direct Rebellion against him who is the Author of Nature; and again, designedly to treat Things, as being what they are not, is the greatest possible Absurdity." What then becomes of the Foundation of this boasted Performance? If its Admirers have thought it built upon a Rock, they may plainly perceive its Bottom is no better than slippery, deceivable Sand.

FOR other new Relations moreover will be found to have arisen after the Fall, which were unknown before, and yet evidently spring out of the *Nature* of Things. God immediately enter'd into Judgment for the audacious Transgression, and gave some Token of his Displeasure by a present Alteration of Man's Circumstances, for the worse, in the natural World; that since he would not govern his bodily Appetites, he might smart for it in his Body, during his life present; then arose Toil and Labour, Diseases, Pains, Decays, and all the Disorders and Disquietudes of Life; and out of that new Relation arose the new Duty of *Patience*; and at last Death produced *another* new Relation: For as none of us live to ourselves, so none *dies to himself*. But Man was not left comfortless, God, mercifully severe, by a new Profusion of Mercy, respited final Judgment, and put him upon a *new Probation*, viz. that of *sincere* Obedience to the Law of Nature, in lieu of entire, which was become impracticable. *The Lord being gracious, and knowing his Workmanship, neither left nor forsook them, but spared them*, Ecclus. xvii. So agreeable to Reason is the now State of *Probation*, that the very Heathens were sensible that this Life was only given us as *such*, and the World we live in as a Place of *Trial*, *Plat. de Leg. Lib. X.*

THEN, and there commenc'd the natural Religion of the MEANS, for carrying on the natural Religion of the End; *Repentance*, and *Prayer*. And to encourage both these Means, and make them the more effectual, a *Promise* was made, which begot a *new* Relation, Occasion, or *Waiting* of *Patience*, *Rom. viii. 25.* of one *mighty to save Sinners, and to destroy the Works of the*

the Devil; who was in due time to become Man from the Seed of the Woman *only*. This was the *Mediator* of the *new and better* Covenant; towards whom, after he had finished the Work of our Redemption, a *new explicit* Relation arose, and out of that, new Duties. A *new* Covenant supposes an old one *broken*; the Condition of which was, the Work of Perseverance and Obedience without Failure, *do this and live*; a just Tribute from Faculties, which had no warp towards Evil, nor the least imbecility towards Good, there being a full Power and untainted Uprightness in every one of them. Therefore no Favour of Repentance allowed, because Man's Condition, compleatly provided for as it was, at first needed it not. Besides, the supreme Authority of God, and the absolutely dependant Condition of Man so perfectly capable of Obedience, naturally enacted, and plainly required the Obedience of the first Covenant to be constant and entire, perpetual and universal. Had Reconciliation upon Repentance been express'd or implied in the original Condition, it could have serv'd to no other Purpose, but to have frustrated the very Nature of a Covenant founded upon unsinning Obedience, so becoming God to require, and Man to comply with, at the first. Besides, no Law in the World, from the Beginning to the End thereof, ever provides, or so much as insinuates a Remedy against the *Penalties* it denounces. Had Man continued therein, God had the disadvantage, in being a perpetual *Debtor* to Man, according to *that* Scripture, the Reward had not been of Grace but of *Debt*.

THE new Covenant of Obedience therefore, the Wisdom, Favour, and Grace of God inter-

CHAP. I. posing as soon as ever there was occasion, and not before, was temper'd with Allowance, and Indulgence to Man's alter'd Condition, and the Performance of the Law of Nature reconciled to the Creature's *Capacity* of obeying; not what was strictly due, but so much as Man, who had fool'd and enfeebled himself by sinning, was able to do, was thenceforth to be accepted through the Mediator: Hearty Repentance, and Prayer (promoted and encouraged by *Hope* in the MEDIATOR, where *promised*; by *Faith*, where made known; and where not known, or the Promise quite forgot or corrupted through long Tract of Time, by *Diligence in seeking to please God*, and *sincere Application* to present Opportunities) where to piece up broken Obedience as oft as it was broken, till it became more and more entire in the Lives of God's Servants throughout the whole World. And God would from thenceforward govern by the Law of FAVOUR and GRACE on his own Part, and of the REMEDY of Recovery on Man's Side, as long as the World endured.

"If you would recommend *Natural Religion* (as is judiciously observed by the present *Bishop of Salisbury*, *Use and Intent of Prophecy*, p. 52. 3d Edit.) "exclusively of all other Assistance, 'tis not enough to shew from Principles of Reason, the *Excellency* and *Reasonableness* of moral Virtue, or to prove from the *Nature of God*, that he must delight in and reward Virtue; you must go one Step further, and prove from the *Nature of Man* too, that he is excellently qualified to obey this Law, and cannot well fail of attaining all the Happiness under it that ever Nature designed for him. If you stop short at this Consideration, What do you gain?

"What

CHAP. I. "What imports it that the *Law* is good, if the *Subjects* are so bad, that either they will not, or cannot obey it? When you prove to the Sinners the Excellency of natural Religion, you only shew them how justly they may expect to be punish'd for their Iniquity: A sad Truth, which wants no Confirmation! All the possible Hope left in such a Case is, that God may freely pardon and restore them; but whether he will or no, the Offenders can never certainly learn from natural Religion."

FROM our Author's Concession, as above, it follows, That there is no Imputation of Unsteadiness or Change in God, for his Condescension to his changed Creature; the Wisdom of Legislators, and the Excellency of their Laws, being chiefly seen in adapting their Laws to the Circumstances of those who are subject to them. That he foresaw what would happen, was no manner of Argument that he should not have suffer'd it to come to pass, much less was it, any Cause of its coming to pass*; for then he would have ceased to have govern'd according to the *Nature* of the Creature he had made. Had an absolute unfinning Obedience been afterwards exacted, there had been no Subjects of the human Race to have obey'd, they must all have perished; but He, who is the Maker of all Men, is the Saviour also of all Men, in the easy practicable Method of the new Covenant. The Law of the first Co-

* Divine Foreknowledge has no more influence in effectuating, or making certain any future Event, than Human Foreknowledge; there being no moral Causality in any Knowledge, but in the *Will*, which is the determining, acting Principle in every Agent. This observation seems to be the true Key for solving the as intricate as frivolous Disputes, about the *Divine Prescience*, and *future Contingents* depending upon the Liberty of *human Will*.

venant

CHAP. I. venant was as exactly adjusted to the Circumstances and Capacity of Man then, as now it is mitigated to his present erring and straying Condition.

Thus commenced the Religion of the *Means*, or the Recovery and Restoration of Man to the Performance of the Religion of the End, as his frail weak Condition, and Imperfection, is now capable of. Had Man never once presumptuously transgressed, nor subjected himself to farther Transgression; neither Repentance, nor Remission of Sins, nor any remedial positive Parts of Religion, nor any Mediator of Reconciliation, nor any Revelation of that Sort had ever been heard of. Neither his Mind, nor his Body would have known the Want of any Thing in his private, or publick Capacity; and where no Want in any Respect, no room for coming to God in Supplication, or Intercession, *i. e.* PRAYER.

Now whatever is beneficial in promoting, and subservient to the furtherance of any Thing, may, in that Respect, be called a MEANS, and accounted more or less useful, or necessary, respectively to its Tendency and intrinsic Efficacy in advancing the other: And consequently, can have no other, but will have all that Appointment, Duty, or Morality go along with it, as it promotes, or has a native Tendency to promote the End, it was ordained to answer. *Media ordinem, modum, mensuram, amabilitatem sumunt, a Fine.* The Religion of the End being necessary to be performed, gives us, at once, the whole Reason and Religion of the other, why it is commanded: For whatever Authority commands the End, must be supposed to oblige to all the proper Means in the Power of the Performer. As sure, therefore, as God has laid us under Obligations

to

to Himself, our Neighbour, and Ourselves, and as often moreover as those Engagements are transgressed, he obliges all Mankind to that REPENTANCE and PRAYER, which are the best natural Means of undoing what has been done amiss, and doing better for the future, in each of those Particulars. And because such Repentance and Prayer towards God are necessary; whatever *explicit Faith* or Knowledge most actuates, and best enlivens both of them, when the World is grown cold and dead to the Performance of either of them, becomes useful in the Reason of the Thing, as well as necessary by the Command of God. Therefore FAITH in our Lord Jesus Christ, who has obtained Remission of Sins, and Access to the Father, is necessary, where-ever made known, *tam necessitate medii, quam præcepti*; because it best operates upon that Repentance and Prayer, which are to restore us to the Religion of the End, and improve our Obedience to the same.

THE performing the Religion of the End, through the Means in our Power, is called *Righteousness* in the Scripture-Style; and to endeavour with all Sincerity, to the utmost of our frail Ability, to observe it through the Means afforded in the Gospel, is to *hunger and thirst after Righteousness*, to be *blest* in so doing, and to be *filled* and satisfied, that those Means are All-sufficient for that End. Thus Christianity, the Remedy, is co-eval with the Disease: And thus true Religion, or the Recovery of Man to his Duty, by the Means of a *competent* Mediator between God and Man, has been, and will be the same in Substance, from the first to the last Sinner of our Race. This gives a right Notion of the Necessity of embracing that Faith, where it is promulged,

CHAP. I. mulged, not for itself, but *subordinately* to something *else*. And as in all other Laws, so in the Divine, the Reason and Ground of them is the only sure Way of ever knowing the true Construction, or the right Measure of their Obligation, or their real Design upon us. And this Way of referring to the End, affords the true Moment and Importance of all Opinions touching that *one* Faith. And as the End of Words is to signify Things, Words themselves (being for the most Part subject to Ambiguity in all Languages, the Reason why most Controversies are generally little else but about Words) are to be measured from Things, and the best Reason of Things, not Things from Words altogether. The next Enquiry is,

How, after the Appearance of Christianity in the World, that Grand *Revolution* of the Redress of human Grievances, promised soon after the first Entrance of Sin, for redeeming us from the Slavery and Dominion of arbitrary Masters, to the Liberty of a better Government, Faith in *Christ*, or the Christian Religion, actuates the natural Religion of the Means for accomplishing the Religion of the End. *First*, it *approves* of all that is *Good* in the old perpetual Religion, both of the End, and the Means. *Secondly*, it mends and *improves* by its Corrections and Instructions whatever was corrupted in *either*, and mightily recommends and enforces both of them.

I. IT *approves* of all that is *Good*. And what better Proof of the Gospel coming from God, than its shewing itself in its most apparent, most declared Design, to have the same End, as right Reason, which certainly comes from him, has, *viz.* for regulating our whole Conduct aright in those three foresaid Relations? Now

Now *that* moral Part of the Gospel stood in need of no Proof from *Miracles*, by Reason it carried its own Evidence and Recommendation along with it. The Use which our Lord and his Disciples made of them, was to attract Attention, and fix the Consideration of the reasoning Faculties of the *Jews*; whether those he wrought himself in the Name of him that sent him; and those wrought by the Disciples in the Name of their Lord and Master that sent them, did not abundantly and unexceptionably prove to them, that he was actually the *expected Messiah**, the HE *that was to come*. That was the very Thing, and the only Thing *to be proved* to them, by Miracles, in concurrence with other Characteristicks of Prophecy, with Respect to them, and to the *Gentiles*.

THE numerous incontestable Miracles did clearly ascertain the World, that it assuredly was the Will of Heaven, for all Men, and, in Time, all Nations, to embrace that most advantageous *Medium* for performing their Duty, presented to them in the Knowledge of the appointed *Mediator* between God and Man. And that there could be no manner, not the least Umbrage of Imposture in the Case; seeing and hearing the old Doctrine set forth to be pursued for the End, was the best and purest that ever was heard, their own Conscience bearing Witness; and the *new* Doctrine of the *Means* (to which the greatest and best Miracles before Witness) declared their Aim and Design to be the furthering and promoting natural Religion, or the Religion of the End, at the same Time it proposed, and expounded the completest of all Means, the *one only true Way*,

* John vii. 31. x. 38.

CHAP. I. for carrying on, and perfecting the Whole Duty of Man, and gaining *Acceptance* with God moreover, though imperfectly performed, at the best.

It is therefore a palpable Mistake, and Misnomer in *such* Writers as our Author, to affirm and accuse, that we Christians argue in a Circle, making the *Goodness* of the Doctrine, a Proof of the Truth of the Miracle; and the *Miracle* a Proof of the Doctrine. The Miracle is, indeed, according to its Design, a Proof of the Doctrine; but not the *same* Doctrine, but of a *new* one. *viz.* That of the most efficacious *Means* from *Heaven*, by a Person sent, his own Son sent by his and our Father there, for carrying on the primary, neglected, dislocated Doctrine, the Religion of the End. This last was evermore absolutely necessary for every Worker of truly commissioned Miracles, to profess never to swerve from, but to be his Aim to promote always, as a collateral incontestable Proof of the Reality of his Mission; and of the missive Friendship of God, as well as of the Superiority of the Power that effected it, above all other inferior, permitted Powers, skilful, as many of them are, in very strange Things. And that *He*, advancing one and the same Design, though by a new and better *Mean*, must certainly be authorized by that supreme God, who, by the Confession of all Men, is the God of the Religion of Nature.

St. JOHN, at the End of his Gospel, sets forth the true Use and End of Evangelical Miracles. These Things were done, *that we might believe he was the Son of God*; agreeably to his own profess'd Design of his own Miracles, *the Works that I do, bear Witness of me that the Father hath sent me* *; *the Works that I do in my Father's Name,*

* John v. 36.

they

they bear Witness of me *; if I bear Witness of my self, my Witness is not true †; if I had not done among them the Works which none other Man did, they had not had Sin ‡; i. e. Sin of Infidelity; with more to the same Purpose.

THUS in the Law and the Prophets, the first Institution attested with Miracles from Heaven, God, the same Yesterday, To-day, and for ever, approved, collected, and wrote upon Stone the *Ten Commandments*, being all that was good of natural Religion, for the Use of the hard-hearted *Jews*, which he wrote upon the softer Hearts of other Nations ||, regulating what was grown neglected by the *Affirmative*, and correcting what was corrupted by the *Negative* or prohibitory Precepts. And as he was thus careful about the Religion of the End, in securing the loving God with all the Heart; and our Neighbour as ourselves; and the Care of ourselves as the Apple of our Eye: Or, in another Abridgment, *the doing Justice, loving Mercy, and walking humbly with God*; fearing him so truly, as to keep his Commandments, and no Man so falsely as to break them: So he took Care to perfect the Religion of the Means, as far as they could be perfected, till the Fulness of the Time was come. Thus Repentance, in particular, ceasing to do evil, learning to do well, was very much exhorted to,

* John x. 25. † John v. 31. ‡ John xv. 24.

|| Ἀθανάτους μὲν πρῶτα θεῶς, νόμῳ ὡς δὲ ἀκέντητοι, πῦθαγ.

Nil esse unum uni tam simile, tam par, quam omnes inter nosmet ipsos sumus. Tum illud effici, quod quibusdam incredibile videatur, sit autem necessarium, ut nemo sese, plus quam alterum diligat. Cic.

Ἰνῶδι σῶδον.

Τέτον νόμον ὁ θεὸς τίθει καὶ ἡ, ἡσιν. *Εἰ πὶ ἀγαθὸν θέλει παρὰ σῶντῃ λαῶς. Arian in Epiēt. Lib. I. cap. 29.

and

CHAP. I. and quickned by many Prophets, and many Providences. And the Faith that secretly enliven'd that, was strengthened by often repeated Oracles, and Renovations of the Promise of their *Messiah*, and of the *Light* of the rest of the World, who was to teach them, and the World, all Things.

MEAN Time the appointed Emblem, and Types of the Propitiation (*Figures of the true*) went on for obtaining the Favour of Heaven. And very wisely, by the Way, were the Sacrifices of that Service, with the numerous Rituals chosen and sorted, for keeping the Children of *Israel*, especially the Tribe of *Juda*, a peculiar unmixing People, with the rest of the World: Intending to preserve them free from the *Idolatry* which prevailed round about them; so as to be an Abomination to many, perhaps, to all their Neighbours. They were allowed, for Instance, both to sacrifice, and eat the *Ox*, and all the rest of his Family; which the *Egyptians* adored as their God, whom they neither dared to sacrifice, nor touch as Victuals: And for that Reason, among others, would have no Communion with the other. Through such peculiar Statutes, and temporary Ordinances, they were, in fact, effectually preserved a peculiar Nation from all others; which was the very Thing God aimed at. Because the Salvation of the World, *Jesus Christ*, the Sacrifice of all Sacrifices, without whose precious Blood-shedding, no Remission of Sins, was, as the Record affirms, of the *Jews*: To be born of one of the Families (the Lineage of *David*) of one of their Tribes; theirs was the Oracle or Prophecies of the Time when, the Place where, the Character and Description of his Person.

THUS the Law given to them from Heaven, bringing with it stated, written Emendations, both

CHAP. I. both of the Means, and of the End of natural Religion, was moreover occasionally a Providential Illumination of the Heathen World, in the Morality they ought to keep up to: And gave them, over and above, some Prediction, and positive Expectation of that mighty Person called the DESIRE of the *Gentiles*; placed, as they were for that Purpose, (being first extraordinarily drawn out of *Egypt* with a mighty Hand) in the Center, as it were, of the then inhabited, and most intelligent Part of the World. Partly by their Captivities to *Media*, and *Babylon**; which severally served to spread the good Notions of their *Decalogue*, and the Predictions of their *Messiah* (the common Saviour of all Men) all over the *Eastern* World; however, the Tradition became afterwards much corrupted and metamorphised, as has been observed by learned Travellers. Partly by their near Communication with the *Phœnicians*; who are most probably reputed to have peopled *Carthage*, which first peopled *South-America*†: But especially by their sojourning, and communicating afterwards, so long, with the *Egyptians*; who, by Means of *Pythagoras*, and *Plato's* Travels thither, taught the *Greeks*; who taught the *Romans*; who may be said to have taught *Europe* some Purity in Morals, and several Excellencies of the Divine Nature. So that what is good in Heathen Ethicks‡, may

* *Zoroastres*, the great Founder of Knowledge and Religion in the *East*, was a Jew by Religion, and probably Servant under *Daniel*: *Pythagoras* learnt from him; the rest of Greece from *Pythagoras*. *Prid. Connection*, pag. 213, 228, 229.

† See Introduction to *Bibliotheca Itinerantium*, by *Harris*.

‡ *Vid. Galeum de ortu & progressu Philosophiæ, ejusque traditione à sacris fontibus. Huet. Alnetan Quest. Euseb. Prepar. Evang. Theoph. ad Autol. Athenagoras. Just. Mart. Apol.*

CHAP. I. be said to have sprang formerly from the *Jewish*, and since, more perfectly from the *Christian* Revelation; whilst some concealed, others knew not to whom they were originally beholden.

It may be observed further, that the Reason, perhaps, why God is so often represented in the *Jewish* Dispensation, as having *Human Parts* and *Passions*, was in Affirmance of their Hope of their *Messiah*; prophetically declarative, that he, who was their Heavenly President and Leader, (the Son of God) would actually, in due Time, take upon him Human Parts and Passions, to do yet greater and mightier Things for them, and the rest of the World. For, after *God was indeed manifested in the Flesh*, all that Language ceased in Scripture.

THEN, upon the *visible* Appearance of Christianity in the World, which is to the World a new Improvement, and the real Perfection of the moral perpetual Part of the other, as well as the last Revelation of the Will of God before he calls it to Judgment; was abolished only what was temporary, and actually had become superfluous in the Mosaick Dispensation; proving it, at the same Time, by greater Miracles, (their own Argument) to be the Will of Heaven, that the *Substance* (being come) of the *instituted Part of their Religion*, the Mediator between God and Man, should in all Reason take Place of the Shadow, and supersede the Figure. Whilst it confirmed, and confirms whatever is really and perpetually good, both in the Religion of the End, and of the Means, whether among the *Jews*, or *Gentiles*: Improving by its better Precepts, Means, Aids, Motives, Helps, that which was good to better; mending what wanted to be mended, and helping what needed Help in each.

THUS,

CHAP. I. THUS, as to the Religion of the End, in the three Divisions of Duty to OURSELVES, NEIGHBOUR, and GOD; the Grace of God (in like manner as the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ) has appeared unto all Men, *i. e.* *Jews*, and *Gentiles*, under which Division *all Men* at that time were comprehended, to whom the Gospel has appeared; teaching us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live *Soberly, Righteously, and Godly* in this present World. So far is it from disapproving, that it professes openly, and every where, to carry on the same good and excellent Ends, that natural Religion was ordain'd unto, through more potent and efficacious Methods. Not condemning what little may happen to be well done, with an Intention of pleasing God, in Dependance upon his rewarding Favour (essential to the Character of well doing before him) under the Notion of *splendida peccata*; but makes itself necessary, where-ever preach'd, by shewing what the other knew nothing of, *viz.* the only Way of Salvation, *how* God remits Sins, and re-admits us unto himself; which stimulates to Newness of Life, introduces our Addressees to him, and actuates all the Means of being good, and doing good. St. Peter, full of the Holy Ghost, proclaims, of a Truth God is no Respector of Persons, but in every Nation be that feareth him, and worketh the Righteousness * of those moral Duties, is accepted of him, *q. d.* to some of the many Mansions of Reward in Heaven, or so accepted, as, by his Providence, to be brought to the Knowledge and Instruction of those better Means, for rendering him not only almost, but altogether a good Christian;

* Acts x. 34.

CHAP. I. as was the Case of *Cornelius*, which gave occasion to those Words.

AND as it approves of Obedience to the natural Law of Righteousness in the Religion of the End, so does it with Respect to that of the Means, Repentance, and Prayer, in almost infinite Places.

II. IT *improves* the good, and mends whatever was corrupted in either of them, at the same time it mightily operates upon them both. It would be endless to enumerate in Particulars, the manifold Excellencies and Advantages of the Christian, over the *Jewish*, *Pagan*, or *Mahometan* Religion; as well in regard to its carrying those moral Virtues, which they all in common make a shew of requiring, to greater Perfection than any of them; as in the better Ways and Means to attain them in that Perfection.

IN short, its grand Purpose is to lead us to Heaven and unchangeable Happiness, by first recovering us to the Image of God, or the primæval Perfection of our Nature; by healing all its Infirmities, as concerning Evil; and animating all its Powers, Choices, and Passions after true Good; by curing and removing all its Defects, Imperfections, and Hindrances, both in Knowledge and Practice, that are prejudicial to the same. Thus the Rule of its Faith and Practice describes itself, *able to make wise unto Salvation through Faith which is in Christ Jesus*; as profitable for *Doctrine*, in that which is true in Divine Things; for *Reproof*, in that which is false in Doctrine; for *Correction*, in whatever is wrong in Practice; for *Instruction*, in all Things good and righteous, *that the Man of God may be thoroughly furnished to all good Works* *. To run over the three Branches of Duty:

First,

* 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16.

First, THE Love of God, which was in a manner lost and swallowed up of Fear and horrid Apprehensions, with respect to their own dispiriting Guilt among the *Gentiles*, is clearly manifested in that great, amiable, and most endearing Instance, *of sending his only begotten Son into the World*, for the universal Redemption of it, sufficient to remove any unrighteous Thoughts of God's being partial. And the Command of loving with all the Heart, Soul, Strength, being very much serviliz'd among the *Jews*, was made a placid and delightful Affection through the Christian Revelation, of its true Grounds and most engaging Reasons, *of God first loving us*, not we him: That he loved us yet being Enemies, so very indulgently to our Happiness, that, if we have any Love for that, or ourselves, or for Loving-kindness of the greatest Cost and Condescension possible from Heaven, it must have its intended Operation *in shedding abroad the Love of God upon our Hearts*, in such a Warmth, and such a Lastingness of Impression, as to constrain us to re-love above all Things, the Divine Goodness, which concerted and effected those gracious Methods, and live to him we love.

THE Author of *Christianity*, &c. * cites 1 John iv. 19. for the Ground and Inducement of our Love to God, *because he first loved us*; wilfully dropping the very Instance and Manner of his first loving us assign'd, ver. 10. viz. *the sending his Son to be a Propitiation for us*. As if he disdain'd for his own Part, and would induce every body else to the like Contempt, of not being beholden to any such Overtures of redeeming

* Page 45.

CHAP. Love: So imperfect and unfair, almost every
I. where, are his sorry Representations of Christianity.

THE *Fear* of God was tempered, and improved from that of Servants to that becoming *Sons*; which is so encouraged, as to cast out servile, distant, unapproaching Fear. To be afraid to displease a *Father*, is a chosen Fear, and, of all Fear, most coercive from transgressing against him: Seeing he gave up his only begotten Son unto Death, the Wages of our Sin, that we might revive in the Body after its Decease, and live for ever: and learn to stand in Awe here of a Father so much kinder to us; and of Sin so abhorrent to him, and which will become our Ruin, when it ceases to be our Fear.

TRUST is endeared and improved upon the same Grounds a Child has to depend upon a reconciled Father, in every Want of Things, fittest for us: No more doubting his Care and Provision for our Temporal State, in the due Use of lawful Means, than of his actual visible Well-Providence for the *Fowls of the Air*, and the *Lilies of the Field*; both Fellow-Pensioners of the Divine Providence, and yet altogether of so much less Consideration than we. This is ridiculed by our Author *, but with great Ignorance; for no Argument in any Human Discourse, tending to the same Conclusion, is to be compared to it for Self-Evidence, nor can any Topick, *a minore ad majus*, more beautifully, or half so familiarly captivate the Mind of Man, or shame his distrustful Logick, upon such a Subject. Whatever

* Page 312.

copies after Nature, is the true Sublime in Language; and the most inward affecting *παιθος*, for the Persuasion of all Men, as all Men are supposed to feel, and understand what they are born to, *Nature*.

BUT to return; if they are respected with the super-intending Care of our Heavenly Father, we his Children, who have the Dominion over them for Use, may be very well assured of a much greater, and more particular Care, especially when we serve him, and rule over them in the Kingdom of God, which is a Kingdom of perfect Friendship and Reconciliation. That, was there nothing else, ought to compose our Minds, and free them from that Distrust so visible in the *Gentiles*, who knew not how God is their Father; and therefore rely so anxiously, and yet so fruitlessly, upon their own Care and Conduct altogether, as if there was none in Heaven to care for them, or mean them any Good. And as to trusting God for Pardon of Sin, and Supply of Spiritual Wants, where had they any? and yet what a Door of Assurance does Christianity set open to all Supplicants? As if we saw the Lord God of our Salvation, knowing his Son, now sitting at his Right Hand, to have once died for our Sins, sign our Pardon with his own Hand, upon the easy Conditions it is offered. If he has actually given us his *only Son*, the greatest of all possible Gifts, how shall he forbid any, or all lesser Gifts and Graces to flow freely from that Fountain and Foundation of all his renewed Mercies unto Man? And knowing the given Son to be also Son of Man, our Advocate always, till he is our Judge, at the last Day; seeing the Mercy and Justice of God united to the Flesh

CHAP. and Bones of Man, how secure are we of Compassion
I. to our Infirmities, of a merciful Sentence, and of not
remarking our Frailty, but our Wilfulness only?

HONOURING God in his Name, Attributes, Providences, was buried under general Neglect; but restored and improved under Christianity, by newer, more charming and ingratiating Displays of each of them, and from much more endearing Reasons, jointly and severally. So was *swearing religiously* by him, on solemn Occasions, degenerated into all manner of Evasions, Wantonnesses, and Prophanations, both among *Jews*, and *Heathens*; but restored to its Religion and Sacredness, by the strictest Prohibitions against prostituting that *Sacred Act* of Religion (necessary in the great Occasions, and Appeals of Society to the great Maker, Partaker, and Supreme Umpire of it) to any ordinary Trifles of the Bullies, and Scoundrels of it.

SINCERITY likewise towards God, so essential to any manner of Pretence of Religion towards him who seeth in Secret, was scandalously transformed by both of them into mere outward Shew and Formality; but retrieved to true Devotion and Godliness, by the severest Condemnation of Hypocrisy, and from the Consideration *who* is Inspector, and will be Judge, and what must be the solemn Account we shall one Day make up.

THE natural and reasonable Duty of *Thanksgiving*, was fallen also into Disuse and Corruption among the *Nations*, and *Jews*, the most ungrateful of the two; for upon these last peculiar Dependants upon the Favours and Indulgences of Heaven,

Heaven, the Heavenly Favours were always thrown away; nothing but Adversity could affect, or make them understand any thing of God long. But what they performed *sometimes*, for *some Things* at the *Cost* and Charge of some external Oblation, devoted as in Eucharistical Sacrifice or Thank-offering, is cheapened to us at the low Rate, the No-Expence of the *Calves* of our *Lips*. With such Sacrifice are we bid to offer Praise, and rejoyce in the Lord, and give Thanks *always for all Things*; for so is the Will of God in Christ Jesus*. So everlasting is this Debt, that it is our Employment in Heaven; and to confess ourselves, on Earth, unable to praise him worthily, is itself a sublime Act of Praise; whilst doing our best, with the best Member that we have for its Propagation, our poor Endeavours are dignified, and made pleasing in the Mediator. So welcome always to God is this Dependance upon him, and Insufficiency of ourselves, this constant Gratitude, recipient Condition, and good Sense of a rational Creature towards his Creator, that the Distributions of Charity are particularly pressed, for the Reason, and for the Sake of the *abounding of many Thank-givings unto him*†; and so rational a Pleasure, that the very best Mirth and Melody of Heart is referred to that chiefest Exultation‡: And the manner of addressing it *in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ*||, is known only unto Christians; how the Acceptance is for his Sake alone, in whom alone God is well pleased.

Secondly, THE Charity which fulfils the Commandment to our Neighbour, is cultivated in

* 1 Thes. v. 18. Eph. v. 20. † 2 Cor. ix. 12.
‡ James v. 13. || Eph. v. 20.

Christianity,

CHAP. Christianity, to the highest Pitch of Benevolence, and Beneficence: Enlarged from the narrow languishing Condition it lay under among the *Jews*, to the loving and doing Good to *Enemies*; and beyond the *Humanity* of the Heathens, who never extended it to *Enemies* as long as they continued *such*; and animated with the most forcible Example of *Godlike* Virtue, of one like ourselves, going about, and doing good, administering to the Welfare of all, though never so unworthy Objects. Yet admitting a prudential Preference with respect to Ability, and Opportunity. *As we have Opportunity, let us do Good unto all Men; especially unto them, that are of the Household of Faith*.*

AND if our Author had better understood the Command of *lending*, in *some* Circumstances, *hoping for nothing again*, he would not have censured it so often † as a Defect in the Christian Morals, and a Want of prudential Care of ourselves. Were we to lend to no one, but who was able to lend us again; they, who cannot lend again, and consequently most of all others in Want of Assistance to encourage their Industry and Honesty, would be unassisted; which was the Intention of the Precept to prevent. One would be a real Act of Beneficence; the other, no better than bartering one Kindness for another, which is no Kindness at all.

HE also shoots his Bolt against the *Israelites* borrowing Jewels of Gold, Silver, and Raiment

* Gal. vi. 10. Agreeably to the Law of Nature, *Optima Societas hominum conjunctioque servabitur, si, ut quisque erit conjunctissimus, ita in eum benignitatis plurimum conferetur.* Cic. de Off. Lib. II. § XVI.

† Page 306, 311. of

CHAP. of the *Egyptians*, and brands the not restoring, as an Act of Injustice. But he might have considered the previous Oppression and Injustice done to that laborious People, in making Use of their Labour, without paying them Wages; and, perhaps, that Loan barely satisfied Arrears: They were first invited and received into *Egypt*, upon the sacred laws of *Hospitality*, as appeared in the Records of the Kingdom; but afterwards by a mere Act of Power, contrary to Law, used as Servants. In that Case, borrowing where there was no Redress in Civil Courts, carried the Idea of a just Demand from those who were glad of the Opportunity of even presenting them with their choicest Things, to get rid of them, *that they might not all be dead Men*. However, as a *Civilian*, he might reason; supposing these Goods lent in Friendship, and those Friends presently after become enraged Enemies, bent upon their utter Destruction, and actually pursue them close for that Purpose; the Law of Self-Defence, which gives a Right to the Life of the Lenders, gives a Right to their Goods; if the Lenders had not otherwise been destroyed, and all after Pretence of Claim, with them, to the Honour of God; the Terror of Oppression; and the Vindication of Innocence.

Thirdly, THE Care of *ourselves* in the due Command of bodily Affections; the Knowledge of our Frame, what is the Dignity of our Nature, yet how defective in Ignorance, Unconstancy, and Pravity of Inclinations; for what we were made; wherein our true Happiness consists; how Sin, Evil, and Temptation, which so much obstruct it in the Time of our Probation, entered into the World; how very liable we are to Sin, yet

CHAP. yet how displeasing it is to God; where is our
 I. Remedy, and on whom we depend (insuperable
 to the Understanding of Heathens) are no where
 taught or explained, or so much impressed upon
 Observance, as in the Christian Institution; not
 to mention the Government of our Thoughts,
 the Spring-head of Sin; or the Avoidance in fact,
 of the Appearance of Evil.

BEFORE I leave the Religion of the End, I
 cannot but remark upon the Unfairness of our
 Author's Conduct; he is himself beholden to
 Authors for some of the best Things in his Book,
 without acknowledging it. Take one or two
 Instances concerning the Glory of God*, which
 is borrowed from the *Religion of Nature deline-*
ated †, one of *Pompey* and *Cæsar* ‡, without tak-
 ing Notice from whom. But his Partiality, with
 respect to those he does cite, is notorious, and
 should be abhorred by every candid Writer and
 Reader, who have due Regard to a true Testi-
 mony. He gravely brings in *Tillotson*, *Barrow*,
Scott, and innumerable more, as complete Evi-
 dences on his Side, and out of them produces a
 Load of Quotations, which make up, in a man-
 ner, half his Book; to prove what? That the
Law of Nature is perpetual, founded in the Rela-
tion of Things, invariable, immutable, indispensable;
that it is the main Scope of Christianity to further
and promote it to due Effect. Truths which no
 Divines, or thinking Christians ever denied, in a
 qualified Sense. To what Purpose then all this
 Parade of Witnesses? To countenance his bad
 Cause, if that could be done, by a Method that

* Page 32.

† Page 119.

‡ Page 41. taken from the other Page 177.

is worse; by suffering the Witnesses to speak but
 half the Truth—Let them be examined. Have
 they said nothing else in Behalf of Christianity,
 and of the *peculiar* Parts and Doctrines of it,
 which he dislikes and rejects*? He knew in his
 Conscience they have. Why then suppress that
 which would have contradicted his half Citations,
 Allegations *ex parte*, and confuted his pernicious
 Designs? Is it fair, is it tolerable in a Writer,
 to alledge one Part of a Sentence, and drop the
 other, or Part of a Book, and conceal the rest;
 because one makes for him, the other against
 him? At that rate, the best Authors, the Bible
 itself, may be lugged in to prove any thing.
 And, indeed, the latter, has fared the worst of
 all in his Hands. He ridiculously draws thence
 the Sword of the Spirit to stab Christianity with:
 But unfortunately for his unwieldy Hand,
 wounds only himself, and his own Judgment:
 He commonly arrests a Text, and makes it speak
 for him, in Contradiction to its Context, from
 whence he took it; and is every where very arch
 in catching at the Sound of Words, in order to
 persuade those, who are shallow enough to be
 affected with that, more than the real Meaning,
 and better pleased with Surfaces, than Solidity.
 But I shall trace him in those Particulars no far-
 ther, than they fall in with my Design. Which is
 next to proceed to the Religion of the MEANS.

* See the Testimony of those *three eminent Divines* against
 our Author's Book, collected and referred to by the *Bishop* of
Land. 2 *Past.* pag. 65.



CHAP. II.

The Religion of the MEANS.

I. Of REPENTANCE.

CHAP.
II.

BOTH *Repentance and Prayer*, ever since Man found out many Devices for parting with the Uprightness he was created in, instantly became *Means* necessary to that State of Sin, Disorder, and Need, both in Body and Mind, which Mankind feel themselves labour under; for putting some Stop to Proclivity to Evil, and successfully improving the Struggle of the Law of the Mind against the Law of the Members, to the Approbation of God and Ourselves, in the Mastery of the former over the latter. This being the true State of Things, by the Confession of all Flesh, that we are Sinners, and that we are Liars if we disown it: Just as Prayer as often as we want; so Repentance as soon as we sin, appears to be our Means, and our bounden Duty, in Reason, as well as Revelation.

BUT though Repentance and Prayer became the constant Medicines for the Sins and Disorders of Man against God, and his own Reason; yet the Virtue and Efficacy of both of them, was owing to the unknown Mediator and Guardian of them, before he was manifested in the Flesh; and

CHAP.
II.

and where he is not as yet revealed: as, where-ever he is, their Virtue is wholly to be derived, and applied through him.* Repentance was no Part of the Religion of our primitive Constitution, but came in after, as the trembling Attendant upon *Guilt*. As soon as our Nature was fallen into a Proneness and a Liableness to that, and Sin, the first Effort of the human Mind for Recovery of itself to Wisdom and better Conduct, upon every wilful Transgression, when the Mind recoils upon itself with Penance, for having done amiss; Repentance is the only natural Consolation, and the best, *after* Sense, Reason can dictate, towards undoing what was wrong; and therefore the *first* Wisdom and Stand for endeavouring to do so no more. *Hierocles*, who was beholden to Christianity for many good Sentiments, says, “When we have fallen from Goodness or Probity, we recover it again by an ingenuous Repentance, submitting to the Divine Correction. For this Repentance is the very Beginning of Wisdom (Philosophy;) and the Avoidance of foolish Words and Works is the first Preparation to that Life which is not to be repented of*.” And consequently, in the natural Religion of sinful Man, it must be reckoned the *first* leading Means for redintegrating our unconstant broken Obedience in those Particulars, which are the Religion of the End. For though God is a *Rewarder of such as diligently seek him*, still Repentance on Man’s Part, in Company with Faith that *He is, and is a Rewarder*, must be the pre-

* Ἐπεὶ γὰρ τὸ εἶναι ἀγαθὸν ἐκπεπρωκαμεν, τὸ γίνεσθαι γὰρ ἀνπλασματόμεθα, μεταμελεία ἐν γυνώμῃ, ἢ δειὰν ἐπα- νόρθωσιν εἰσδεχόμενοι. Ἡ δὲ μετάνοια αὕτη φιλοσοφίας ἀρχὴ γίνεται, καὶ τῶν ἀνοήτων ἐργῶν τε καὶ λόγων φυγὴ, καὶ ἡ μετα- μελήτης ζωῆς ἢ πρῶτη ἀδελφική. Cassm. Pyth. p. 167.

vious

vious Foundation of coming to him, and of diligently seeking to please him: Inasmuch as he regards not to *bear*, much less reward the *impenitent* Sinner; another Dictate of natural Reason.

Now, because Guilt naturally intimidates the Mind, and makes it diffident of the future Favour of the Party offended; that *Change* of Mind (*Μετάνοια*) returning from Evil to Good, and that *after Care* (*Μετμέλεια*) to do better, springing from Sorrow for what is past, (the meaning of Repentance in Scripture) both grow heartless and unactive, without an *effectual* Persuasion of Reconciliation and Forgiveness of Sin; therefore Faith in our *Lord Jesus Christ*, the Mediator of Reconciliation, presents itself, to improve, move, and inspire it with lively Powers, and an actual setting about it.

ACCORDINGLY the first Knowledge of a Saviour or *Jesus*, is revealed for that very purpose, *He shall save his People from their Sins* *; and the Knowledge of Salvation given to them is *for the Remission of their Sins* †; the *Word*, the *Way*, the *Gospel* ‡ of Salvation, all mean the same Thing. The true Notion of the *Blessing* of a Saviour, preaching Peace or Remission of Sins, consists in *turning away every one of us from our Iniquities* ||. This is the *Peace of God which passeth all Understanding*; or surpasseth, and is better than all other Understanding and Knowledge; the

* Mat. i. 21.

† Luke i. 77.

‡ Εὐαγγέλιον ὃ λέγεται, διότι ἀγγέλλει ἡμῖν περὶ ἡμῶν καὶ καλῶς ἔχοντα, ταῦτα εἰν ἀγαθὰ, ἀφέντι ἁμαρτιῶν, διακρίων, ἡμῶν εἰς ἑαυτοὺς, καὶ υἱοθεσίαν Θεοῦ. Theophylact's Pref. to St. Mat. apud Mill. T Gospel God's Word, or good Saying.

|| Act. iii. 26.

Grace

Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God. This is the *Kingdom of God, of Christ, of Heaven*, i. e. for bringing us thither; a Kingdom of Reconciliation, and Restoration of Mankind, or Sinners to eternal Life, by taking away Sin, which was the Bar to the Entrance into it; bringing *Glory to God in the Highest, on Earth, Peace, good Will towards Men*: This is the mediatorial Kingdom, not of this World, in which Christ is King; the *Way*, the *Truth*, and the *Life*: for this Cause, he tells *Pilate*, he came into the World to bear Witness of *that Truth*, that he was the *sent* of God, and *came* from him, to be the Kingly Mediator and Saviour of the World; a *good Confession* as the Apostle calls it.

THE Laws of which Kingdom are not the old Law of Works, of absolute perfect Obedience to the Law of the Mind, of God, and Reason; but the Law of the Righteousness of *Faith*; accounting that Obedience, which is sincere, zealous of good Works, to the utmost of our Power, though mixed with Frailties and Defects, to be equivalent to an exact adequate Performance. And therefore that Kingdom is said to consist in that *Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost* *, which flow from that practical Belief of Forgiveness of Sins through *Christ*. The *Holy Ghost* † *shedding abroad* the Love of God, and the Knowledge of the Lord Jesus the Mediator, upon the *Hearts* of the first Converts, confirmed the Truth of it by divers Miracles. And they being purposely wrought for ascertaining the Truth of the glad Tidings of Salvation, that *Remission of Sins* was to be had in *Christ Jesus* only, to say

* Rom. xiv. 17.

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deliberately,

CHAP. II. deliberately, that those undeniable Miracles were Imposture, or that That great Sinner *Belzebub* had any Hand in them, was the same Thing as to say, the *Thing proved*, viz. the saving Grace and Favour of God promulged to the World, for remitting Sins in that Method, was a Cheat and Imposture. That made the *Sin*, but more properly *Blasphemy* against the *Holy Ghost*; and made it also *irremissible*, not to be forgiven in this World, nor that which is to come*; because it amounts to the denial of the Remission of Sins, or Man's Salvation. And if any fall away after they have received that Belief which accompanies Salvation, and were illuminated (as at the first in Baptism) by the *Holy Ghost*, and have tasted of that Heavenly Gift, as well as Remission of Sins, they not only tread under foot the Son of God, and put him to an open Shame, as being a Deceiver; but do despite unto the Spirit of Grace. And it is as impossible to renew them again to Repentance†, as it is to induce a Man to repent of his Sins, who does not believe the Remission of them.

So long and so firmly, by the way, was this capital Blessing of the Gospel received in Belief, that it was as needless to make it an Article of a Christian Creed, as to have made the Gospel itself an Article of it: Nor was it inserted, till it was denied in some Respects by the *Basilidians*, *Montanists*, but especially the *Novations*. See *Crit. Hist.* of the Creed, pag. 361, 380. *Novatian* allowed of no Remission of Sins committed after Baptism; for which he deservedly got the Character of an *Enemy of Mercy*, a *Murderer of Repentance*, a *Doctor of Pride*, a *Corrupter of Truth*,

* Mark iii. 28.

† Heb. vi. 4. x. 26.
and

and a Destroyer of Charity. *Cyp. Ep. 57.* That Comfort and Joy in believing, the first Churches are said to exult in, and receive the Word with Joy: Upon the same Account are we bid to rejoice in the Lord always, and again to rejoice*.

So comfortless was the Heathen World before the Salvation of the Gospel visited them; so doubtful were the best, so dead and desponding were the Generality, as to the Practice of Repentance, having no Certainty of the Remission of Sins; that they contentedly sat down in their Darkness, and cover'd themselves with its Shadow and with the Repetition of their Sins; who knowing the Judgment of God (that they who do such Things are worthy of Death) not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them†. For they who happen'd to reason right from the Dictates of natural Conscience, concerning the Displeasure of God for such wicked Actions, were otherwise instructed and over-persuaded by their Teachers, the *Philosophers*, That there was no Displeasure or Anger in God for the Offences of Men. So *Lactant. Lib. de Ira, passim*, is positive not only as to the *Epicureans* and *Stoicks*, (to whose Principles it was exactly agreeable) but, *Ita omnes Philosophi de Ira consentiunt*. And with respect to the contrary Opinion, viz. *Ut irascatur Deus, a Philosophis nec susceptum est unquam, nec aliquando defensum*; that God could be angry, was never either embraced or defended by them; and at last gives his Opinion, *qui sine ira Deum esse credunt, dissolvunt omnem Religionem*. If God is not angry with Sinners, what need of Repentance and forsaking Sin? Or what Occasion to fear him?

* Phil. iv. 4.

† Rom. i. 32.

DEISM DELINEATED.

THUS neglecting Repentance, and the Fear of God, which is the Beginning of Wisdom and Religion, they went on greedily in Iniquity, till their measure was so full, as to be given up to a reprobate Mind. Another of the *Apologists* says, What has *Cicero*, what has *Seneca* (who have wrote most divinely of other Duties and Offices) written of Repentance? But of Repentance they knew no more than this, that it was, *Passio quædam animi veniens de offensa sententiæ prioris*. *Cicero* declares the Opinion of all the Philosophers, Off. Lib. III. Sect. 27. *Hoc commune est omnium Philosophorum, nunquam nec irasci Deum, nec nocere*; that God was never *Angry*, nor would he ever hurt Men. In short, the Heathen World being without a known Covenant, were without a known Promise; and being ignorant of *Jesus* and the *Resurrection*, which brought the Knowledge of the Remission of Sins, and Life and Immortality to light, together with the absolute Certainty of a future Judgment, they not knowing the manner *how* it was granted, were *without Hope* of it; which left them in a manner *without God in the World*, i. e. as to any Repentance towards him. They were fallen, as the Apostle tells the most learned of them, into a general Ignorance of it*, as well as of the Object of Worship: Their Case, however, was not desperate, it was pitiable, and therefore engagingly address'd them, That the times of that Ignorance, God winked at, but now commands all Men every where to repent, because he hath appointed a Day, &c. by that Man *Jesus Christ*.

* *Acts* xviii. 30.

HENCE,

DEISM DELINEATED.

HENCE, upon the very first Commencement of preaching the Gospel, by the *Fore-runner John*, the first Disciples to Evangelical Repentance, were made in the Belief of him that should come after. And after our Lord had wrought out our Pardon by his Death, Resurrection and Ascension, in all the Preaching and Writing of his Apostles, where Repentance is urged, it is never once urged alone: But either, where Faith in Christ was first received, which previously supposed that Foundation; or, where it was not as yet embraced, recommended always for converting *Jews* and *Gentiles*, in Conjunction with being baptized in the Name of *Jesus*, or Lord *Jesus*, for Remission of Sins*; which necessarily includes Faith in him as the Mediator of Reconciliation. The Apostle particularly enumerates it together with Baptism in his Catalogue of the Fundamentals of the Doctrine of Christ; wherein the *Hebrew Converts* were not so steady as they should be†; or else in Conjunction with his being risen, and ascended to Heaven, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance to Israel, and Forgiveness of Sin‡; or, his being the Judge of the World§. And St. Paul's shewing to them of Damascus and Jerusalem, and all the Coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do Works meet for Repentance||, was joined with the Preaching of *Jesus*§. To all Converts we find it inseparably urged, with Faith in *Jesus*, or Belief of the Gospel, which is the same thing. This signifying, that Repen-

* *Acts* ii. 37, 38. iii. 19. † *Heb.* vi. 1, 2.
‡ *Acts* v. 31. || *Acts* xvii. 31. ‡ *Acts*
xxvi. 20. § *Acts* v. 30.

E 3

tance

tance was impracticable, where there is no Persuasion of the Remission of Sins; because that Faith, or Persuasion of the Goodness of God in *Christ*, reconciling the World to himself, is the Motive and moral Cause of it: Which Cause being a Revelation from the Gift of God, the Effect, Repentance, may very justly, as it sometimes is affirmed, be his Gift: For the *Gentile* had no Motives to Repentance; and the *Jew* none in Comparison of the *Christian*; and therefore to give them such Motives, was the same Thing as to give them both Repentance. And what was the Effect of preaching Remission of Sins to the *Gentiles* in the Name of *Jesus*? The *Jews* themselves are forced to confess it, *that God had granted to the Gentiles REPENTANCE unto Life*, Acts x. 18. implying that Doctrine to be the Fountain of Repentance.

THAT Grace of God being granted, and as far as it appeared to all Men, REPENTANCE becomes an able, well-promoted, and most encouraged Undertaker of the Work of *forsaking Ungodliness and worldly Lusts*, and living *soberly, righteously, and godly*, &c. The persuading Men into the Remission of Sins in the Method of God in *Christ*, is one of the *Keys* of that Kingdom; and to be appointed to the *Ministry* of that gracious manifold Word of Exhortation, is the same Thing, as to have the *Keys* appointed, or given for opening the Kingdom of Heaven to Believers in *Jesus*. That eternal Life, consequent upon Sins being remitted through him, may be our Hope; and eternal Death, the Consequence of their being retained, may strike our Fear, with such a Force, as to divorce us from our Sins.

AND

AND because true Repentance not to be repented of, includes in it a Return to that universal Obedience which God and the Constitution of Things have commanded; called therefore *Conversion*, or turning to the Lord; *renewing of the Mind*, putting on the new Man, the new Creature, *Regeneration*, new Birth, newness of Life: and forasmuch as Faith in our Lord *Jesus Christ* touching Remission of Sins, gives Nerves and Motion to that Repentance, which sets all the Wheels of Duty in regular Motion, and puts the whole Course of a good Conversation in Order, for bringing forth Fruits meet for Repentance; to induce Men to repent, and do the first Works of natural Religion, to the utmost of their Power, by the Means and Motives of the Gospel, is the great Business of the Gospel. The Contents of *Christ's own* preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God is accordingly summed up, in preaching, *repent ye, and believe the Gospel**; and *St. Paul*, according to the Commission he received from *Jesus*, appearing to him from Heaven, *Act. xxiv. 18, &c.* to open the Eyes of *Jews and Gentiles*, and turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God, *that they may receive Forgiveness of Sins*, and Inheritance among them, which are sanctify'd by Faith; shewed first unto them of *Damascus*, and at *Jerusalem*, and then to the *Gentiles*, *that they should repent and turn to God, and do Works meet for Repentance*, in Virtue of that Faith. This is the Account he gives of his own Preaching and Doctrine, in all Truth and Soberness, before *King Agrippa*, and the whole Court. At another

* Mark i. 15. Mat. iv. 17.

Time, reckoning up the whole Counsel of God in manifesting his Son in the Flesh, and rehearsing before the *Elders of Ephesus*, the most material Things of that Gospel, which he, for his Part, preached with such zealous Diligence and Fidelity, as to be free from the Blood of all Men, by his holding nothing back of what was indispensably necessary both to *Jews and Greeks*, sums up, in *Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ* *. No wonder, therefore, if *that Faith* so often stands for the Christian Religion in general, seeing it is the principal Instrument for carrying on its Designs for promoting Repentance, which promotes the Endeavours after, and Practice of all good Works.

AND here it may not be useless to offer a Solution of that implicated perplexing Question, *What is true Religion? What must I do to be saved?* Because the true Answer will, at the same Time, account for the different Descriptions, and seeming Catalogues of Fundamentals, and Abridgments of the Contents of Christianity, as they occur in Holy Scripture. The *Question* is not one, but many, even a *Legion*, if one was to count by the Number of Answers given to it; affording rather a negative Knowledge what it is not, than positively what it is; the pregnant Occasion of Confusion and Wrangle, and of being tossed to and fro with every Wind of Doctrine! wrong Apprehensions and Mistakes must continue, till that negative manner of resolving is changed into some positive, satisfactory Account of it; which is easily attainable both in general, and particular, if we would but measure it by, and ap-

* *Act. xx. 21.*

ply

ply it to its Ends and Designs in general, and particular.

THE Question cannot be put with respect to the Religion of the END, because that is no Question, all are agreed: When it is asked therefore, What is true Religion? It must be understood only, *What is the true Religion of the MEANS?* Now the Design of the Holy Scriptures, or Christianity in general, being to make us wise unto Salvation, and recover us from a vain Conversation to the Happiness and Perfection of our Nature; from an accusing Disobedience to God's Laws, and consequently fearful apprehensions of Punishment, to that sincere Compliance we are capable of, which may make us secure of his Favour, and a Recompence; by removing all Hindrances both in Knowledge and Practice; and affording all necessary *Aids, Motives, and Helps*; it must follow, that there are just so many Designs of Christianity in particular, as there are Imperfections and Hindrances in Knowledge, and Practice, to be removed and amended; and as there are Helps and Motives wanting to effect it, with regard to the Religion of the END, and of the MEANS. It must therefore be, as it is, variously set forth and described in its Designs in Holy Writ, according to the Variety of those Exigencies, and Defects both in the Religion of the End, and the Means: As if, whenever it applies itself in either of those Cases, to any People, it was its *main and only Business* to redress *that* Defect, or supply *the* wanted Motive. To put the Question in general, "What is true Religion?" When the Want and Application is only in particular (and almost always it is put in Reference to Particulars only, to

CHAP. to some few or more Contents of it :) It is much
II. such a Question, as what is Law? Or what is
Phyick?

To the former, suppose one to answer, "The best or truest System of *Law* is that which orders every thing that is right, by a competent Authority, for the Good of the Whole:"—Though that is, perhaps, a right Account in general, forasmuch as all Laws are resolved into it, and from thence derive their Reason, and Powers of obliging. But, notwithstanding it ought to be esteemed a satisfactory adequate Answer in general to such a general Question, it seldom answers the Mind of the Asker, because he generally means, according to the Country he has been bred in, and the Laws and Customs he has been inured to, almost nothing else, but the Law of his own Country. And as often as he means that, the Way to bring him in Satisfaction, is first to ask him what is his Case of Wrong, which he would have the Law accountable to him for, it being the Business of all Law to prevent and redress Wrong. And then as he sheweth his Matter, let him be answer'd accordingly, by shewing what the Law is in that Case; how particularly it distinguishes his Right, and with what Penalties enforces the Recovery of it; and that will be the most pertinent and contenting Answer to such a Querist.—Again, to the other Question, What is *Phyick*? If one should reply, "It is a Profession, undertaking to cure all Distempers, curable:" It may be, he utters the whole Truth: Still the Querist finds himself nothing the better for that general Truth; because either he himself, or some of his Friends aileth something, and he would gladly know a Remedy.

If

CHAP. If that was his Meaning, (and most likely it was,) viz. What Cure and Assistance can *Phyick* bring to me, or my Neighbour? The ready and the only good Answer to such a Patient is, first to find out, by asking proper Questions, what his Ailment is, and then prescribe the proper Medicine accordingly. And as that is *true Law*, and Proceedings of Law, which in all Cases answers its Intendment, in rectifying what is wrong among Subjects, by consulting the Good of the Whole: And as that is *true Phyick* which corresponds to its Undertaking in endeavouring the most effectual Means, for curing all Diseases curable: So, in the Application, that is Religion, and that is *true Religion*, which is best framed and adapted to obtain its obligatory whole-some Designs upon voluntary rational Creatures, by redressing all that is wrong, and wanting; and healing what is disorderly in their Conversation; and inducing them by the most powerful Means and Motives, to discharge their Obligations in the three Branches of Relation which God, and the Constitution of Things, have placed them under; to pursue the Religion of the End, and use the Religion of the Means, in order to perform it with greater Care, and to the greatest Perfection, that it may conclude in so much greater Happiness to the Performer.

BUT then considering again, in particular, that when Christianity enter'd the World, Mens Conversation was mixed up of some little Good and very much Evil, some Truth with a great deal of Error; and none, perhaps, so completely wicked as to have no one Virtue, or Seed of good in them (that Character, I presume, belonging to none but the Devil, *the Evil one* :) If a Mixture

CHAP. II. Mixture of Good and Evil, Virtue and Vice, then the Evil and the Error only wanted to be purged away, and the contrary Good and Truth to be planted in their room, by those Applications that can best effect it. Thus Truth is serviceable to Good, in driving out Error, as often as it is the Author of Evil. And if Men and Christians are still at this Day, and ever will be, a *Miscellany* of Right and Wrong, Sense and Reason, more or less; partly sinful, partly virtuous; and they who have the most Virtues have them in the Al- lay of Human Imperfection: And if this is the undoubted State of the Case; What Thing else, or what Thing better *in particular*, can the Christian Religion be? Than to supply every Lack of Virtue, and of the Truth that has a Tendency to promote Obedience, and remove every Sin and Irregularity in Practice, and every Error also in Judgment, so far as it has an Influence on the other. To touch upon our Duty and Obligations in the aforesaid Distribution.

IN the Religion of the End, as to *ourselves*; Is *Humility*, the previous Ground of all Instruction and necessary Knowledge inceptive of *Discipleship* wanting? You find it the Business of Christianity, in its Endeavours to cure us of all our Maladies and Disorders, to supply that Defect almost in the *first Place*: For our Lord came not to call the Righteous, such as conceited themselves such, like our Author, but Sinners to Repentance; which Text he strangely perverts, pag. 42. as if his twelve Disciples were the most scandalous Sinners in the World. Thus begins the first Words of our blessed Master's Sermon, *Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* For they only will learn God's Ways,

how divinely they abound in Wisdom and Prudence in his Kingdom of Reconciliation, or Method of saving Men; He therefore only dwelleth with those of a low and contrite Spirit, to revive the Spirit of the humble, and to rejoice the Heart of the contrite ones: the Pride therefore of rejecting that Method must needs go before Destruction.

THE Author of *Christianity, &c.* pag. 307. derides this, as if Christianity was an Enemy to the Rich, as such, and to all the honest industrious Methods of becoming so. But that is writing Reflections on his own Understanding, and throwing out Reproaches which revert upon himself. Is there no Difference between poor in *Spirit*, and poor in outward Circumstances? He could not but know that the Text he cites from *St. Luke*, is to be interpreted by *St. Matthew*. The great Positiveness and Vanity of this Author, as an Author, diffuses itself throughout his Performance, till he comes to his last Paragraph, which has more of the Sneer than any Seriousness in it. The manifest Scope of his Book is to extol and magnify the *Sufficiency* of his own, and his Disciples Reason, as a Guide to Salvation and Happiness, independent of any external Revelation from God; which deserves no better in their Estimate than to be excluded from Reception, and banish'd from the Place, where it is receiv'd, as *unreasonable*; though in its practical, which is its very and only Design, it exhibits nothing contrary to Reason; as *partial*, because not as yet communicated to *all*; and he has spared no Pains to save *Missioners* the trouble, that it never may; as *unworthy* of God, commanding *arbitrary* Things; as *dishonourable* to him, having no tendency to promote the *Honour of God*, or the Good

CHAP. *Good of Men*, but the contrary; that it is every way needless, and in all respects useless; that Revelation and Reveries are synonymous Terms; that Superstition and Enthusiasm are both the Cause and Effect of all supposed Revelation from Heaven. But he is so unhappy and inconsistent, as to wound himself and his Scheme through the Sides of Christianity. He every where makes these the reigning Propositions of his Book. That *natural and reveal'd Religion only differ as to the manner of their being communicated*; that Christianity is neither more or less than the *Republication of the Law of Nature*. If then, they are so much the same, in his own great Judgment, does not all those Reproaches recoil and stick to his natural Religion, the Idol he adores, and has set up to pull down Christianity with? If these are the best Fruits of the arrogant, scornful *Riches* of his Spirit, it is left to God, what Share he has in the Blessedness of the Kingdom of Heaven; but this may with Charity be affirm'd of the Memory he has left upon Earth from this Performance, that he is a poor, dishonest, inconsistent Writer, which will more fully appear in the Sequel. But to return.

Is there wanting a Disposition to *mourn* for our Sins? Or a due *Desire* of the Knowledge and Practice of all *Righteousness*? Or the *Purity* of being *inwardly* and *sincerely* religious? Or *Patience* under unjust *Persecution* and *Calumny* for the Sake of Christ? They are all recommended and promoted with a *Blessing*. The Blessing of the two first, to mourn for the Want, and to hunger and thirst with the Desire of Righteousness, is as obvious, as that Righteousness itself is a Blessing. The Blessing of the third is undeniable, I mean the *pure in Heart*: Because, as the first Degree of Virtue

Virtue is to abstain from evil Deeds, and do good ones; the second Degree, and that called *Perfection*, or *perfect Man*, to refrain from ill Words, and speak that which is good to the Use of edifying; the most perfect and blessed of all, is to keep the Heart with all Diligence, to the delighting in good Thoughts only, and expelling all evil ones. With respect to the last, the Apostles were so blessed, that they *rejoiced* in their Afflictions; and exhorted others to count it all Joy when they fell into the like: No heathen Virtue could ever inspire Joy, it could go no farther than make it tolerable.

As to our *Neighbour*; is *Meekness*, *Mercy*, *Peace-making* neglected? You have them enforc'd, one with the greatest Happiness on Earth, the second with an high Reward in Heaven and Earth, the third with the highest Encomium. Is, as in other Places, Charity to our Brother very cold, and little minded? Then *Faith* is only *Christian Faith* when it *works by Love*; the *End of the Commandment** is *Charity*; *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*; forasmuch as it promotes all the Good, and prevents all the Evil to our Neighbour that is in one's Power; it is therefore an excellent Summary of that eternal Law and Right which is founded in the Nature of Things, and is the Root of all Civil Laws†. But as Civil Laws can only provide against Mischief from known Causes, and Mischief does continually arise from unforeseen Causes and Circumstances, which occasions so many new Laws; all that the

* 1 Tim. i. 5. Τῆς παραγγελίας, which signifies in the New Testament, a Commandment, with a particular Charge, going along with it, upon a particular Occasion.

† Radix Justitiæ, & omne fundamentum Equitatis. Last whole

CHAP. II. whole Multitude of them can effect, is only to lessen Evil; whilst this Law of Charity by promoting the inward Principle, would totally prevent Wrong and Evil, which is the End of all Law*. This is in St. *John* † sometimes the old Commandment from God, and the Nature of Things ‡; sometimes the new; because the Darkness is past, and the true Light now shineth.

THE Tradition of the Scribes had so corrupted the true Interpretation, and mutilated the Righteousness due unto the Royal Law; that our blessed Lord, by setting aside their destroying Glosses, which set aside the Peoples Obedience, making the Commandment of God of none Effect; and by re-asserting it to its true Scope and Purpose, then lost, may be said to be a new Legislator (in the Authority of *I say unto you*) of the Decalogue; especially of the Law of loving one another, as it is enforced, and exampled in the Gospel.

MORE particularly still; Is a candid Opinion commonly absent from the Judgment we make of our Brother? Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned.

Is the Jewish Nation remarkably defective in the true Ends of Sacrifice, and instituted Parts of Religion, stopping short, and placing the all of Religion in such Things? Then the Prophet op-

* Νόμος, ἀπο τοῦ νέμω, giving unto every one their due.

† 1 *John* xi. 7, 8.

‡ Called in many Places ἐν πολλῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ; and distinguished from the Laws and Precepts of *Moses*, by being ἀπ' αἰσθητικῆς κρίσεως, *Mark* x. 6.

portunately

CHAP. II. portunately sums up, prefers, and urges the disregarded Ends; *What does the Lord require, but to do justly, love Mercy, and walk humbly with, &c.* The Lord would have Mercy, Justice, Humility, and not Sacrifice.

ARE the Jewish Converts offensive to the Gentile, in any particular Province, as *Antioch*, *Syria*, and *Cilicia*, through a mistaken Zeal for a Necessity of their being circumcised also, in order to be Christians? Then, at a solemn Assembly of the Apostles and Elders, in Opposition to such an unchristian Opinion, *Why tempt ye God, to put a Yoke upon the Neck of the Disciples, which neither, &c.* and the Sentence is, *not to trouble them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God.* Are some of the Customs and Indulgences of the latter, a Stumbling-block to the former, who were in a contrary Sentiment, and an Occasion of not accompanying with them? Then it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and the Apostles, to lay upon them no greater Burthen than these necessary Things, to abstain from Meats offered to Idols, from Blood, and from Things strangled, and from Fornication, from which, &c. *Acts* xv. It was necessary to forbid them Fornication, that they might relinquish their Heathenish Notion of the Innocency of it; and occasionally necessary to prohibit the other, for a temporary, charitable Compliance with the converted Jew's unconquerable Abhorrence of those Things; who, as long as their Temple was yet standing, and Sacrifices there still continued, could not be reconciled to the Use of Blood in any thing but Sacrifice; which ceasing with the Temple, the direct End and Occasion of the Prohibition of abstaining from Blood, and from things strangled ceased; though the secondary

CHAP. condary moral Sense of refraining from Cruelty,
II. and *Luxury* still continued, and was enforced
with more open Precepts.

Is common Swearing *by the Temple, by Heaven,*
&c. rife and shameful, as formerly every where,
so now too much in our Streets? Our Lord in-
terposes, *Swear not at all*; St. James puts on the
Style of a Fundamental, *but above all, Swear*
not, in that impious, prophane manner.

Is fervent Charity in forgiving Trespases
wanting, in company of sobriety and watch-
ing unto Prayer, then the Apostle puts in, *above*
all Things [either Sobriety or regular Prayer] *have*
fervent Charity among yourselves, for such a Charity
shall cover the Multitude of Sins, i. e. entitle to a
plentiful Forgiveness from God, according to the
Petition in the Lord's Prayer, 1 Pet. iv. 8.

Is Relief often forgot to the distressed, when
it is in the Power of those who have received the
Faith, and make their boast of that, and of hear-
ing the Word *? Then Christianity, in order to
redress such a defiling of the Word, by despising
of the poor †, and to persuade the better to the
Virtue that was wanting, delights to represent
and urge itself by the Apostle, to be that *pure and*
undefiled Religion, which visits the Fatherless and the
Widow in their Affliction, as carefully, as to keep
ourselves unspotted from the World ‡. If the
Religion of any Believer tolerated him in those
Defects, it could not be pure and undefiled,
however good in other Respects. It was need-

* James xi. 14. James i. 23.

‡ James i. 27.

† James xi. 6.

less

less for St. James to enumerate *Faith* in Christ, CHAP.
in his then Account of the Christian Religion; II.
because those he wrote to, actually misplaced the
Whole of Christianity, in a mere believing, with-
out those becoming Works, regardless of re-
lieving Charity, and personal Purity; resting in
the Means instead of the End, and never applying
the Means to its appointed End, their Faith was
impure and defiled: To such Abusers of their
Faith and Profession, it was therefore wise to
omit, and superfluous to mention, the Necessity
of Faith, of which they had so much already;
but of such Works which they egregiously want-
ed; grounding his Argument upon an establish'd
Maxim, *he that offendeth in one Point is guilty of*
all; as if he had said, Morality in all its Branches
being the End of Faith, he that allows himself
in transgressing one Branch of that Religion of
the End, does not answer the End of Christ's Re-
ligion, and therefore is guilty of deviating from
the whole Design of it. Therefore Faith is not
the less necessary, for his omitting it in his De-
scription of pure and undefiled Religion, before
God and the Father. For St. Paul, and all the
Preachers, had before sufficiently insisted upon
the Necessity of Faith, where it was *not* receiv'd,
as the only Way whereby *Jews* or *Gentiles* were
to be saved.

AND to the end that so needful, and excellent
a Piece of Humanity, and natural Religion,
might never be forgot, the Judge of all the
Earth, erects a parabolical Scheme of the future
Judgment upon that, not as if he would not
likewise judge every Man according to his *other*
Works; for as the Law of Christ is the Law of
the best Means to the best End; and as they
F 2 who

CHAP. II. who have sinned without that Law, shall not be judged by that Law; it follows, that we who sin under, are to be judged by it; and consequently for wilfully failing in the Means, as well as the End. And as Remission of Sins by the Mediator, is the great Doctrine of the Gospel attested by the Father, and by the Miracles of the *Holy Ghost*; to impeach that Doctrine, or to say those attesting Miracles were wrought by the Evil Spirit, is the unpardonable Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; and those *idle dissolute Words* (according to the Subject Matter) which our Lord says shall be brought to account at the Day of Judgment, *Mat. xii. 36.* The Judge, I say, particularly mentions, that he would be sure to take an Account of *that*, and not omit it: To the Intent, that every one of his Servants might think upon Judgment as oft as they omit it, having at the same Time, a fair Opportunity and Means sufficient for doing it; *that they shall find Judgment without Mercy, who shew no Mercy*, and that they who *deny him* now in *those Works*, shall then be denied by him. That they who merely Prophecy, or do Miracles *in his Name*, serve other People with his Name, but not themselves. For what signifies mentioning the Means to them that know them, if the *End* is unanswer'd? To make it accordingly the more memorable to our Observance, he draws up a solemn Scheme or Representation, how the *Christian* Professor will come off at the last Day, upon the foot of performing, or neglecting *that* Virtue; as may be seen, *Mat. xxv. 31, &c.* But from that Draught of the general Judgment, there is no reason to think that other Works done in the Body will not be brought to light: only that it was the Mind of Christ to enforce, and it is certainly the strongest

strongest Way of enforcing; much like the restraining from Censure and rash Judgment of others, *judge and ye shall be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned*; or the *Psalmist* promising, *Psal. xv.* a Place in God's holy Hill to those that walk uprightly, speaking the Truth from their Heart, doing no Evil to, nor taking up a Reproach against their Neighbour, respecting the Servants of God, and performing their Oaths. An Adjudication to every Christian that he will most *assuredly* take an Account of our Lives in Relation to that Duty in particular; to reward the Performance, even though the Doer had forgot it; and punish the contrary Disobedience, of those especially, who are his Disciples. It is passing Sentence according to that *universal Verdict*, *By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another*; suitable to that well known Maxim of the Law, *he that loveth God, loves his Brother also*. And to what Purpose would it be to put Faith in himself, and the Advantage of that Divine Means for loving God and our Neighbour, into the Sentence of any but those who wilfully contemned it? As to those who were acquainted with it, and employed it not to that Purpose, it can be mentioned only by way of Aggravation, since the End is not attain'd. He will renounce all Acquaintance with them, who pretend any with him, and yet learn'd or considered him so little, as to neglect a Duty which Humanity itself teaches; especially knowing withal, what a peculiar and *personal* Consideration he enforces it with, by telling those that perform'd it, they did it to *Him*; and those who omit it, that they as good as dared to omit it to himself in *Person*; and therefore should be punish'd according to their Deservings,

without Mercy, for shewing none, even towards him, who was profuse of his Blood and Life for their Sakes.

Thus again with respect to both those Duties, to our Brother, and Ourselves; in order to dissuade the better from the prevailing Vices (before mentioned) of bitter Envy, Strife, Vain-glory, and lying against the Truth, Christianity put on the Style and Description, as if that was the whole Stress of its Commission, of being that *Wisdom from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits, without Partiality, and without Hypocrisy* *.

AND where Temperance and Justice were notoriously deficient, as in *Felix and Drusilla*, desirous to hear of the Faith of Christ; the Faith of Christ by its great Apostle reasons of them, and their Necessity, if they would in any measure become Christians, *Acts* xxiv. 24. As before is reason'd with the hard-hearted oppressor *Nebuchadnezzar*, by the Mouth of *Daniel* iv. 27. *wherefore break off thy Sins by Righteousness and thine Iniquities, by shewing Mercy to the Poor*. So the Forerunner *St. John* told the Soldiers, Men of Violence and Mutiny, what they were to do; *to be content with their Pay, and to do Violence to no Man*.

Is there a Distinction of clean and unclean Meat and Drink subsisting, and Dissention, and Discord, and every evil Work thence arising? Then the Kingdom of God consists not in Meat and Drink; but *Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost*.

* *James* iii. 17.

Lastly,

Lastly, WITH reference to our Duty to God, true Religion is abbreviated, in *fearing him and keeping his Commandments, which is the whole Duty of Man*; in *loving the Lord our God with all our Hearts, &c.* which is the first and great Commandment.

AND where the Belief of the one true God, Maker of Heaven and Earth, is not receiv'd, or is corrupted with Idolatrous Worship of Idol Mediators, the Business of Christianity, and its Professors, (as it was the Apostles in the Case of the Idolatrous *Lystrians*, *Acts* xiv. 15. and *Athenians*, xvii.) should ever be to remove that false Foundation in the first Place, before *Jesus Christ*, the true Mediator, is laid, as the chief Corner-Stone.

II. IF we proceed to the Means, so great Stress is laid upon Repentance, as if it stood for the whole. *That Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name among all Nations* *. *Repent and believe the Gospel* †. *Went out and preached that Men should repent* ‡. *Except ye repent ye shall perish* §. *Repent and be converted that your Sins, &c.* †. *Now commandeth all Men to repent* §.

THE like is laid upon the Resurrection of Christ from the dead **: *If thou shalt confess with thy Mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine Heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved*. Because his Rising from the dead

* *Luke* xxiv. 47.

† *Mark* i. 15.

‡ *Mark* vi. 12.

§ *Luke* xiii. 3.

† *Acts* v. 19.

§ *Acts* xvii. 30.

** *Rom.* x. 9.

CHAP. II. is essential to support our Belief of having Justification, or Forgiveness of Sins before God: From which Belief followeth that Repentance unto Life, which worketh the *Righteousness of Faith*, i. e. (as opposed to the Righteousness of the Law) sincere Obedience to God's Law, and Acceptance with him, under a full Persuasion, that we have Salvation or Pardon of Sin thro' Christ; who is the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth. And because his Death and Resurrection are the two Pillars, having for their Basis the Faith of his being the Son of God, and Son of Man, which support the Belief of Remission of Sins; therefore the same Apostle elsewhere *, delivers as he had received the Importance of them, *ἐν πρώτοις*, among the first Things. In another Place †, the first Principles of the Doctrine of Christ are laid down in more Particulars: *Repentance from dead Works, Faith towards God; the Doctrine of Baptisms, of laying on of Hands, of the Resurrection, and of eternal Judgment.* And because the Belief of Jesus Christ being equally Son of God and Son of Man, maintains the Faith of his being the compleatest Mediator; and the Belief of such a Mediator's dying for our Sins, and rising, and sitting at the Right Hand of God to mediate and intercede for our Justification, best secures and maintains the Belief of Remission of Sins, which animates Repentance and all the Religion of the Means, which restores our Obedience to, and Performance of the Religion of the End.

HENCE Faith in Christ being the principal Mover, or vital Principle of all the rest, so often

* 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.

† Heb. vi. 6.

occurs

CHAP. II. occurs as a summary of the Gospel, or true Religion. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved* *: God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life.—He that believeth in the Son, hath everlasting Life, and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life †: This is Life eternal [or the Knowledge of the Way how Sins are remitted] to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent ‡; ye believe in God, believe also in me ||, as the only appointed Mediator of Redemption † and Intercession §. The Words whereby Cornelius the first Gentile Convert, and his House were to be saved, in his Belief of a God, were those accompanying the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, Peace by him, that he is Lord of all, that he died, rose again, is Judge of Quick and Dead, and that whosoever believeth in him, hath Remission of Sins **.

Lastly, Is the Knowledge of what excludes out of the Kingdom of Heaven wanting? All hypocritical Outside Religion, like the Scribes and Pharisees ††. The Pride and Unteachableness of Human Reason ††; the imputing the Miracles of Christ to an evil Spirit ††; the refusing to embrace the Christian Faith where offered §§; the resisting legal Authority for resisting Sake |||; they who continue unrighteous, Fornicators, Idolaters, Adulterers, effeminate Abusers of themselves with Mankind, Thieves, Covetous,

* Acts xvi. 30, 31. † John iii. 16, 36.—The like affirmed Chap. v. 24.—vi. 47. 1 John v. 12.
† John xvii. 3. ‡ John xiv. 1. † John xiv. 27.
§ John xiv. 13, &c. ** Acts x. 36. compared with xi. 14.
†† Mat. v. 20. †† Mat. xviii. 3. †† Mark iii. 30. §§ Mark xvi. 16. ||| Rom. xiii. 2.

Drunkards,

CHAP. Drunkards, Revilers, Extortioners*, and the
II. Doers of Evil, out of a Principle that Good may
come of it †.

SEEING then that every one of these, the Religion of the End, and of the Means, are necessary, each in their Order; and seeing it is the Method of particular Parts of Scripture, (the Whole whereof is our entire Rule in Divine Things) to inculcate most the Necessity of particular Doctrines, where, and to what Persons they were wanted most; it will by no Means follow, that because one or more Particulars are made necessary in one or more Places, that it therefore abates any Thing of the due Necessity of other Particulars in other Places. As if Charity, for Instance, being one Branch of the Religion of the End, was the *one Thing necessary*, or the only Inquisition by which we were to be tried at the last Day; or, because it is greater than Faith (as every End is with respect to the Means) that therefore we may disuse the Means, and propose to attain the End without them: Or, that Faith was a completely sufficient Necessary of itself; though it worketh not by Love, though it attaineth not its End, good Works. For that is a Way of applying the *entire* Rule by Halves, or in the Phrase of our Author, *here a bit, and there a bit*: Setting one Scripture against another, and putting asunder what God has joined together.

WHEREAS the *general* governing Design of the *whole* Scripture, is to supply *all* Wants, and redress *whatever* is wrong and defective: It is *pro-*

* 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

† Rom. iii. 8.

fitable

fitable in setting forth what is *true* in all the Principles and *Doctrines* of Godliness; for *Reproof* of what is false and erroneous therein; for *Correction* in whatever is irregular and bad in Morals; for *Instruction* in whatever is good and Praise-worthy, and practicable in *Righteousness*; 2 Tim. iii. 16. and so making *wise unto Salvation*; and so harmoniously *furnishing all good Works*, and requiring an universal Obedience to the Religion of the End, and of the Means. Mean time, it is the *particular* Design of this or that Scripture, to urge the Necessity of this End, or that Means, or Help, as Occasion served. When a Rule measures any Thing in Consistence with its own Entireness, it is then only an *entire* Rule: Otherwise used, it is no more than a Rule *in Part*. So that whatever is said of the Necessity of any particular Duty, or Doctrine, must ever stand together, and be measured with, what is said of every other Doctrine or Duty, as long as we profess to measure one, and t'other, by the same Rule.

HENCE it is plain, that FUNDAMENTALS, or the *Things that edify*, in the Knowledge of our Duty, Faith, Love, Union, are one and the same; and to ask for a Catalogue of the former, is the same, as to desire a List of the latter. The Christian Notion of *Edification* being that of Repairing, by pulling down what was wrong, in order to the *building up* what is regular, entire, and becoming the *Habitation of God through the Spirit*, as we all ought to be in our publick, and private Capacity, Eph. ii. 22. God was deserting his old Habitation the Temple of *Jerusalem*, and therefore would build another in the Hearts of his People. As many Defects as there are in the Duty of private Persons,

CHAP.
II.

sons, or in the good Order, and Decency of religious Societies for the publick Worship of God, and the ministerial Parts of Religion, indispensibly subservient to the Furtherance of Religion, as we are sociable Creatures; The contrary Remedies are just so many edifying Things, or so many Fundamentals, either to those private Persons, or to those Societies.

SOME Things, therefore are more fundamental than others; and to some Persons, and Societies, more than others; and at one Time, and Place, more than another; just in Proportion as Defects and Disorders call for them; and the Knowledge of the Remedy becomes applicable according to the Measure of the Revelation of it at different Times, and Places. Thus the first Fundamental supposed, viz. the *Being of a God*, which being the prime Ground of all Religion, all are agreed in it in Pretence or Reality, who have any Religion in Pretence or Reality: The Second is like unto it, viz. Belief in *Christ*, the Mediator in Behalf of every Man that sinneth, and standeth in need of Repentance and Prayer, i. e. all Men. *Ye believe in God, believe also in me. This is Life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, who was sent by him*; and upon the Rock of that Confession that *Christ was the Son of the living God*; (*Peter's* Person was not, could not be a Rock, though his Name alluded to it) he would build his Church; and the *Gates of Hell*, Death and the Grave, should not be able to hinder it from a Resurrection and eternal Life*.

THIS, by the Way, helps us to the true and perfect Notion of *Christian Perfection*.

* Mat. xvi. 18.

When

CHAP.
II.

When and where any thing is *lacking* and *imperfect* in Understanding, Faith, Manners, it becomes an *Occasional Perfection* to supply and make good that Defect. (1.) In *Understanding* we are bid to go on to *Perfection*, Heb. vi. 1.—v. 14. 1 Cor. xi. 6. Phil. iii. 15. Col. iv. 12. 2 Tim. iii. 17. (2.) *Faith*; Eph. iv. 13. as the Fulness of Christ, or the Measure of the Stature of Christ as a perfect Mediator, is taken from the equal Fulness of his being Son of God, and Son of Man Personally united, so, to be perfect in that Faith, is to be perfect in *Christ Jesus*, Col. i. 28. The Fruits of that Faith are well known to be *perfected only by Works*, James ii. 22. (3.) *Works* or *Manners*; Is a perfect Example wanting of the *Love of Enemies*? *be ye perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect*, Mat. v. 48. Would ye perfect your *Love of God* [in Christ?] it is to be done, by *casting out Fear*, 1 John iv. 18. Or surround your Soul with the Bond of all Perfection of Duty owing to God, and Man? Love and Charity to both ties you to your good Behaviour to each, and with your own Consent, Col. iii. 14. Is there an Emulation among the Virtues, which is the greatest? Let Patience have its perfect Work, for *that makes perfect, lacking nothing*. If any Man offend not in Word, the same is a perfect Man, and able to bridle all Appetites and Members of the Body, James iii. 2. He is, or may be, as perfect, as much Master of lesser Difficulties, as he that lifts a hundred Weight has no Occasion to strain at fifty. Is the *Heart*, the Seat of Integrity, enquir'd into? What Thoughts, Intentions, and Conduct are to perfect that, secure Singleness and Sincerity of Heart, and exclude double Mindedness? *Walk before me and be perfect*, Gen. xvii. 1. i. e. Let the

CHAP. II. the Pleasing of God, as always in the Sight of God, be the Measure of your Actions, that will give Uprightness, as it did to *Job*, who feared God and eschewed Evil, *Job*. i. 1, 8. ii. 3. Does any rich Man pretend to justify himself, as perfect in loving God and his Neighbour? *Mat*. xix. 20. &c. If thou wilt be perfect, sell all, giving his Word and Promise of having Treasure in Heaven: Founded upon that known Criterion of the Love of God and Godliness, Man liveth not by Bread alone, or the Abundance of the Things he possesseth, but by every Word [or Promise] that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God doth Man live. A Perfection peculiarly recommendable to scrutinize none but those who would justify themselves as above. Thus every good Work has its several and respective Perfection, *Heb*. xiii. 21. And as the Lord Jesus Christ gains the passable Perfection to all our Imperfections, *St. Peter*, i *Ep*. v. 10. prays that we may be perfected, stablished, strengthened, settled by that Means.

THEREFORE Faith in him is the Head of all the Religion of the Means, of Repentance, Prayer, which are absolutely necessary; of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, which are generally necessary or exceeding useful; for operating the Religion of the End, the keeping the Commandments in that Uprightness, which frail peccant Mortals are capable of: Called the Foundation of God standing sure; be that nameth the Name of Christ, i. e. on whom his Name is called by being baptized into his Name for Assurance of Remission of Sins, which invigorates Repentance; or he that either names or invokes him, as Mediator in Prayer, should depart from all Iniquity*.

* 2 Tim. ii. 19.

As

As then the End of Christian Faith is the Salvation of our Souls, and that Salvation is the Remission of Sins through Christ, the Mediator, as has been shewn; the other subordinate Fundamentals of this common Salvation are fundamental, and to be estimated more or less so by this Criterion, as they support and influence this Belief. The New Testament accordingly declares what Particulars are most subservient, by Way of Fundamental to the other, by expressly affixing eternal Life, or Salvation to them also; as his being the Son of God*, at the same Time he is Son of Man, being sent from the Father; his dying for Sin, his Resurrection† to the Right Hand of God: All which directly and immediately qualify him the fittest, most adequate, and most potent Mediator between God and Man. The two former declared fundamental by our Saviour; the two latter by *St. Paul* ἐν πρώτοις. All these being constitutive of the Notion of such a Mediator, are set forth in Holy Scripture in all Plainness, and therefore must be believed by all, who would have the best Benefit from their Faith in Christ. Other Truths or Doctrines are more or less important as they approach to, or recede from these chief Points concerning the Author and Finisher of our Faith. *St. Paul*, *Heb*. vi. 1, 2. sums up the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, or the Foundations that are not to be renewing, but to be proceeded on to Perfection, in Repentance from dead Works, Faith towards God, Baptisms, laying on of Hands, Resurrection from the Dead, and eternal Judgment.

* *John* iii. 18. *John* xvii. 3.
Heb. vi. 1, 2.

† 1 *Cor*. xv. 3, 4.

CHAP.



C H A P. III.

Of PRAYER, *the other Means of Natural Religion.*CHAP.
III.

PRAYER is the last Instance of the Religion of the *Means* to be shewn, how it operates on the other Parts of Religion, and how Faith in the Mediator Christ operates upon that, before I draw the general Conclusion touching the Necessity of that Faith, where it is promulg'd. That Prayer in all its extent, (as distinct from Thanksgiving, containing προσευχή, *Supplication* for the Good that is wanted; δέσις, *Deprecation* of Evil felt or feared; ἐντεύξις, *Intercession* in behalf of others) is the Religion of the Means, is very evident: Because, had Man continued in the State of Innocence, and pursued the original Ends of his Being for which he was made, there had been no Want of any Good, nor the Sense of any Evil felt, nor the Apprehension of any feared; having done nothing to forfeit it, he was sure of the Continuance of every Thing, to make him perfectly happy. No Occasion therefore for Supplication, Deprecation, or Intercession; no praying for Forgiveness of our Trespases against God, nor any Opportunity of forgiving Trespases against himself, when neither of them were in Being: Nor yet for Governors and those in Authority, supposing the Increase

Increase of Mankind in that State; because the Necessity of Government arose out of the sinful disorderly State of human Nature, called by Plato ἀταξία; Government and Laws were made for the *Unrighteous, Disobedient, and Lawless.*

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III.

IN the due and daily Practice of Love, Honour, and Esteem, of the most adorable Perfections of the most excellent Being; in Imitation of his Goodness and Benevolence; in Admiration of the Grandeur and Divine Architecture of his Works; and the frequent Devotion of Praise and Thanksgiving, not only in their Lips, but their Lives, for their Creation, and all the Blessings of this Life, so fully enjoyed without any Interruption, or Allay; Men in that State of Innocence and Happiness had fully acquitted themselves (as do the Angels, who keep their first State) of their Relation, and Obligation of paying religious Worship and Adoration to their Maker. Pure Thanksgiving that God had sown all their various exquisite Blessings, and they had reaped them, was a State of Joy becoming their innocent Circumstances, clear of the Sorrow and Confession of Sin attending upon Prayer, or the *seeking* of Happiness, which is the Subject of it. Nor had any other Object of Worship been known, to whom such Acknowledgments were due, but Him only. Now since Man through Sin is confessedly fallen into a State of Disorder and Need, both in Body and Mind, he is consequently fallen under the *Necessity* of Prayer; which is an Act of the Mind, addressing its Desires and Breathings after Help, to some Being able and willing to supply all Wants, and relieve and avert all Evils and Miseries. And whom can the Mind of Man ever suppose so ready to hear, and so able to answer,

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swer,

CHAP. swer, as the great Creator of itself and all other
III. Creatures?

BUT being unhappily conscious, as every Man is during his present Life, of having incurr'd his Displeasure by transgressing his Laws; as *Guilt* naturally raises a *Suspicion* of the Loss of Favour, so the Mind does not *naturally* and genuinely believe him so *willing* to redress Grievances, and grant Petitions, in the Supplicant's *own* Name, and for his own Sake, without the Interposition of *some* to intercede and mediate for the obnoxious Transgressor. Thus Prayer for Wants, and Thanksgivings for what Sinners have receiv'd beyond their Deserts, is a Duty of natural Religion, arising out of the *alter'd* State of Man, as he is a Sinner, conscious of transgressing the Laws of his Maker: Thus that Part of Worship, consisting of Prayer, seems to have had its first Beginning and Use. And that original Part consisting of Praise and Thanksgiving became *doubled* in its Obligation and Returns to the gracious Provider for our well-being, both from the Sense of having receiv'd, and from the Sense of having not deserved, but forfeited by Guilt, the good Things promotive of it; which so much the more enhances the Riches of Divine Goodness, in still affording a great Plenty of them for the Life that now is, and for that which is to come, the Means of Grace and Hopes of Glory, upon a new Trial of Obedience. And as there is now a double Reason for Thanksgiving, it is doubly acceptable to God, as it disclaims Self-sufficiency, the Religion of Deists; and professes a profound Dependance upon him. And every grateful Effort of that kind is a double Benefit to the Performer, as present and frequent Recollection is a re-
peated

peated Enjoyment of the past Benefactions; and CHAP.
entitles to future ones. III.

IT is certainly fit and reasonable in our laps'd State, that we, who know we receive all from God, should acknowledge that we do so, by *asking* of him, as well as by Thanks and Praise. But, in the preceding State, the latter seems to have been sufficient Homage for acknowledging Dependance upon the Author of our Being. Had he continued therein, he had been as the *Angels*, who are represented in Scripture always *praising* (no where praying to) God. If the Preservation of their Being, or of the Blessings annexed by his Favour who gave them Being, was condition'd upon their Behaviour, the keeping up to that Behaviour may be said to give a *Right* to the Preservation of their Being, and of the Blessings originally appendant to it; therefore not so properly Matter of Prayer to God; who, though he has it in his Power, would never have it in his Will, to make an Alteration for the worse, in the Circumstances he had placed them in. Frequent Thanksgiving therefore, was enough to put them in mind of their continual Benefactor, and Dependance on him; and the keeping that continually in mind, afforded the strong Reason and deep Impression of Gratitude, not to offend against him.

AND whereas both confessed and felt is the State of our Case, that there is an universal Failure in Man, in respect of performing his entire Duty, as the Light of Nature requires from him; that *Consciousness* of transgressing, impairs his Confidence and Affiance in God, disheartens and distances Applications to him, according to that
G 2 natural

DEISM DELINEATED:

CHAP. natural Sentiment of the blind Man, *we know*
 III. *that God heareth not Sinners.* Sin and Guilt naturally beget a Strangeness between the Offender and the Offended, intermit wonted Communion, daunt and intimidate the Thoughts of former familiar Acceptableness. And because, in the Nature of Things, the *Conscience of Guilt* makes fearful, fills with Suspicion, eclipses the Sense of Favour, shames and discountenances the usual Approaches unto God, without *some* to help, some *one* qualified to intervene; there had been an End of Communication between God and Man. Man had gone on continually in Rebellion and Wickedness, and all hope of Recovery to his Duty, and to the Favour of his Maker had been desperate for ever, if some had not intervened to qualify the Shame with some Boldness, and mitigate the Fear with Hope. It therefore pleased the Almighty, upon the first Entrance of Sin into the World, to appoint a *Mediator*, and lay help upon *one mighty to save*, to reconcile the Enmity, lessen the Distance, and cheerfully and completely restore former Access and Acceptance, and be the perpetual *Center* of Communion between God and Man: Of all the Blessings and Favours descending from the former; of all the Application of Prayer or Praise from the latter. That all Doubt and Diffidence might be removed out of the Worshipers Thoughts, in coming to the Throne of Grace; and yet, at the same time, all Honour and Awefulness preserved for the Forgiver of Sin, and Preserver of Men.

THIS Door of Salvation was open'd in that Promise from the Beginning (the first Principle of all reveal'd Religion) *The Seed of the Woman should break the Serpent's Head*; "Which being
 " farther

DEISM DELINEATED.

CHAP. " farther explain'd by after-Revelation, the whole
 III. " Religion of God's People after that, was to offer
 " up their Worship unto him through Hope in
 " this *Mediator*; and all the *Idolatry, Polytheism,*
 " and other *false Worship*s, which after arose in
 " the *Heathen World*, were all by such corrupt
 " Deviations therefrom, as the Superstitions of
 " Men, the *unfaithful Way of transmitting Divine Revelations* by *Tradition* only, and the
 " Decay of all Divine Knowledge occasion'd
 " thereby, in Process of Time introduced among
 " them *.

THE Worship of God, that Branch of the Religion of the End, for which Man was made, (consisting in Man's applying himself immediately, and in his own Name, to the Author of his Being and his Blessings, with his Homage of Praise and Thanksgiving for the same) receiv'd an Alteration, as soon as Man alter'd his State from Innocence to that of a *Sinner*, viz. that thenceforward even his Thanks and Praises were to be offered up, and should only find Access and Acceptance through that *Mediator* of God's own appointing; who was to be *all in all*, in all the Means of recovering Man to perform the Religion of the End. Constituted therefore the *Head* of all *Communication* of that Worship of *Prayer*, which arose out of his State of Sin and Want; as that *Means*, or Religion of the Means, which is requisite to effect, and conducive to perfect the Religion of the End, in him.

* Dr. Prideaux's Letter to the *Deists*, p. 145, &c. where the Proof follows at the End of his Life of *Mahomet*, third Edition.

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WHO then so able, or proper to teach us *what* to pray for, and *how*, and in a manner the freest of Idolatry, Superstition, and every Defect, as our Lord Jesus Christ, who gives Efficacy to our Petitions, and is the Procurer of all Redress? Who so capable to relieve the Ignorance of Man's Supplications, or so fit to particularize and explicate that best and most ancient Form of Heathen Prayer, which Socrates collected out of Homer, "Great God, give us the good Things that are necessary for us, whether we ask them or not; and keep evil Things from us, even when we ask them of thee?" The same Socrates says in Plato's 2. Alcibiad. or Prayer, "'Tis altogether necessary you should wait for some Person to teach you how you ought to behave yourself both towards the Gods and Men."

FOR the most part, the Gentiles wholly mistook the Things they ought to pray for; Things pertaining to this World only, being, in fact, their supreme, their sole Petition*: Whereas our Lord in his most perfect Form, has inserted but one Petition for temporary Things. They believ'd they should be heard for *their much speaking*, using so many vain Repetitions, as if to storm and stun their Gods into a Compliance. The requisite Qualifications, Humility, Fervency, joined

* Num quis quod bonus vir esset gratias diis egit unquam? At quod dives, quod honoratus, quod incolumis, jovemque optimum maximum ob eas res appellant, non quod nos justos, temperatos, sapientes efficiat, sed quod saluos, incolumes, opulentos, copiosos. Judicium hoc omnium mortalium, fortunam a Deo petendam, a seipso sumendam esse sapientiam. Cotta in Cic. de Nat. Deorum. This the Scripture, directing to the true Foundations of Happiness, calls asking amiss, to consume upon the Lusts.

with

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with Faith and Trust, which implies *Resignation* as to temporal, and *Assurance* of being heard with respect to spiritual Things: Purity, Charity, were unknown to them; *through whom, i. e.* in whose Name, *in whom, i. e.* the Holy Ghost*,

* Whatever else praying in the Holy Ghost, Jude 20. in the Spirit, Eph. vi. 18. means, it seems very evidently to import these two Things: 1. In the Spirit of ADOPTION, whereby we cry, Abba Father; Rom. viii. 15. Gal. iv. 5, 6. shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost, Rom. v. 5. which Holy Ghost is shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, Tit. iii. 6. The First-Fruits, or Earnest of the Spirit which we have received, Rom. viii. 23. and whereby we are so often said to be sealed, (another Expression for adopted) is the Resurrection of Christ, comparing Rom. viii. 11. and 1 Cor. xv. 20, 23. the Spirit of Adoption, called the Spirit of Promise, Eph. i. 13. consisting then in the Promise of Remission of Sins, of an Inheritance, and of the Redemption of the Body, or its Resurrection, Rom. viii. 23. in the same Sense that the Spirit of Adoption (which we have received) beareth Witness with our Spirit that we are the Children of God, ver. 16. in the same ver. 26. it maketh Intercession for us, not with God, but ourselves, as is the Province of the Spirit to advocate and it does so with Groanings ἀλαλήτως unuttered. In the same Sense as we, who have received the First Fruits of the Spirit, and are in earnest Expectation to be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God, groan within ourselves, ver. 23. And in the same respect we know not what to pray for as we ought [who have not received the Spirit of Adoption] in the same, the Spirit also helpeth our Infirmities and Ignorances, making us to know what Things we ought to pray for, who have received the Spirit of Adoption, ver. 26. 2. Praying in the Holy Ghost, or in the Spirit, imports according to the Will of God, ver. 27. the Spirit intercedes for us according to the Will of God, ver. 2. The Gospel which contains the Will of God, is called the Law of the Spirit of Life, in Christ Jesus, 1 John v. 14. This is the Confidence that we have in him, Christ our Advocate with the Father, that if we ask any Thing, according to his Will, he heareth us, Eph. i. 18. Through him [Christ] we both (Jew and Gentile) have Access by one Spirit [of Adoption] unto the Father. And the Jewish Temple being forsaken, and the Partition Wall broke down, to be both together a new Temple, an Habitation of God through the Spirit.

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and

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and in what most approachable Ideas, and Style of Address, *i. e.* that of *our Father* (by Adoption) was even unknown to *Jews* as well as *Heathens*; but were all made manifest in the *Christian* Religion. The Worship of Prayer was instituted in Christ's Name, the *sole Mediator*, the sure Center of Communication between God and Man, and the actual Head of all the Means of Man's Recovery, on Purpose for promoting in us both the Religion of the End, and of the Means: For to both it is excellently serviceable, and most incomparably conducive.

I. WITH respect to Duty to GOD, Prayer whether publick or private, mental or vocal, exercises us daily in the Belief of his Presence with, and Providence over us, and our Affairs; in the Honour and Veneration due from Body and Soul to the Divine Majesty; in the Sense of our Obligations to, and Dependance upon his Goodness and Long-Suffering; for our Preservation, and for the Supply of all our Needs. Though God could give unask'd, knowing our Wants better than we ourselves; yet he will give only in such a manner, as to remind us who we are, *i. e.* *Sinners*, to whom nothing is owing by way of *Debt*, or any Obligation as to Favour. And therefore as he is in *Debt* to us for nothing, but where he pleases to make a Promise upon Conditions on our Part, he expects and directs Application to his Mercy, by way of begging and *asking* in the Name only of *Him*, through whom alone he has given us Access. And that actuates our Fear, Hope, Trust, Love of him, in Consideration of his Knowledge, Power, Justice, Goodness, and Loving-kindness, with a Care and Concern of pleasing him; and with those consenting *Cords* that draw a Man unto God.

2. As

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2. As to our NEIGHBOUR; it is required to be so daily qualified in the Controul of *Wrath*, and all Uncharitableness, that those Exceedings and Transports of the *irascible* Passions are no Day (not the shortest in the Year) to have a longer Period than the setting of the Sun. And what fitter Monitor for banishing daily out of the World all those malevolent, outrageous Purposes, which are the Authors and Abettors of most of the Injuries done to our Neighbour? Or what better daily insinuate and instil the *benevolent* Affections, to the doing him all Good, than that indispensable daily Concomitant, *Charity*, which obliges us to forgive all that trespass against us, and intercede for their Good, as well as our own?

3. As to OURSELVES; daily Prayer is a daily *memento* of that *Purity*, *Humility*, and *Resignation* to the Divine Will, which ought to qualify the Supplicant, who hopes to speed in his Suit. And as to the *Means*, *Repentance*, nothing can be devised a greater Perfecter of the same, than Confession of Sin, which daily accompanies Prayer. "What better Step towards making
" Reparation for our Fault, as we are capable
" of, towards God? For as by Sin we have dishonour'd God, disown'd his Authority, and
" cast the utmost Contempt upon his Laws, so
" by confessing our Sins we take Shame to ourselves, and give Glory to God, we accuse and
" condemn ourselves of Iniquity and Folly, and
" justify the Wisdom of God; we acknowledge
" that he has done righteously, but we have done
" wickedly; we own that his Commands were
" holy, just, and good, and that we ourselves
" were

CHAP. III. "were guilty of the highest Impiety, Injustice, and Ingratitude, in transgressing them. By this Means, we do in some measure recal what is past, and virtually revoke what we have done: This is an Act of Submission to God's Authority over us, and expresses our Desire of returning again to our Duty and Obedience." For as that daily expresses our Sorrow for what we have done amiss, that supposes and fixes a daily Resolution on our Part of endeavouring to amend for the future.

It is hardly possible in the Nature of such a Self-Accusation and Arraignment of our voluntary Transgressions, for any, using it with Seriousness and Recollection, not to be affected with Concern and Uneasiness, for having offended so good and gracious a Benefactor, and grow more and more determin'd not to relapse into such Provocations and Follies; but never imagine themselves at liberty to go on upon a new Score of sinning, as the manner of some is. If we use daily Confession as we ought, instead of adding, it must necessarily lessen the Number of our Sins. For how can we reconcile it to our own Thoughts, if we think at all, to venture deliberately upon that Commission of Sin, or Omission of Duty, which almost as soon as done or omitted, must be confessed and repented of? This is so very absurd, that a rational Agent cannot continue in his Sins, if he duly and truly continues in his Prayers. For, if we persevere in this Day by Day, it must daily have an Influence on us to our Amendment, for perfecting Repentance, and advancing in Holiness. Because, none can long bear the tacit Reproach of coming daily into the Presence of God, to confess the same Offences

over

over again, which they daily repeat, and take no Care to avoid. The very Shame of Mind, added to the Pain and Irksomeness of the Reflection, must needs make them at length, either quit their Sins, or their Prayers. But, if they are daily constant in the latter, the repeated Discipline of Reproach and Admonition, arising out of the Confession of Sin, not forgetting the Aggravations, nor favouring with Excuses, every Excuse of Sin being an actual Accusation of God. That there must be no Chosen, no willing Regard to Iniquity in our Heart, as ever we expect Him to regard our Prayers; must in time be effectual to make them forsake it; and make them moreover less severe, and more candid to the Faults of others, which is the Perfection of Repentance. Thus the Son of *Syrach* recommends Prayer, *Return unto the Lord, and forsake thy Sins, make thy Prayer before his Face, and offend less*, Ecclus. xvii.25.

Thus daily Prayer is fitted, and therefore prescribed continually, and without ceasing, (which implies no more than being constant twice a Day, according to the Analogy of the *continual* and *unceasing* Sacrifice at the Temple, tho' but twice regularly every Day) and so much pressed and required for exercising the Mind in those Habits and Dispositions, as shall regularly flow and shed their Influence into the several Acts of performing the Whole Duty of Man, as Occasion offers; as is well summed up in a Prayer of that *Book*; with respect to God, "For improving in the Knowledge of him, and in Works suitable to that Knowledge, in a true Faith, purifying Hope, unfeigned Love, full Trust in him Zeal for him, Reverence of all Things

"that

CHAP. "that relate to him, Fearful to offend him,
 III. "Humble under his Corrections, Devout in his
 "Service, Sorrowful for our Sins. With respect
 "to *ourselves*, it impresses Meekness, Humility,
 "Contentedness, Diligence in all Duties, Watch-
 "fulness against all Temptations, perfect Purity
 "and Temperance, and such Moderation in all
 "lawful Enjoyments, as never to become a Snare
 "unto us. With regard to our *Neighbour*, that
 "we do as we would be done by, yielding to all
 "whatever by any Kind of Right becomes their
 "Due, that we put on such Bowels of Mercy
 "and Compassion, as never to fail doing all Acts
 "of Charity to all Men, whether Friends or Ene-
 "mies according to the Divine Example."

Now the constant Exercise of Prayer pre-
 serves, strengthens, and perfects the Will in its
 true Liberty and Choice of loving the Divine
 Perfections, and Heavenly Things, by the na-
 tural Efficacy of Discipline and godly Custom ;
 its Influence over the rest of the Subject Powers,
 is thereby gained more and more ; and re-
 peated Acts of this Godliness augments the Power
 of resisting Temptations, deadens the Love of
 the World, and quickens and improves our
 Faith, Affections, and Affiance in another ; and
 at the same Time brings in all the Joy and En-
 joyment receivable from worldly Things, subor-
 dinated to that Expectation. And therefore it is
 said, that Godliness [*Exercise in this Godliness,*
 in Opposition to *bodily Exercise* for bodily Emo-
 luments only, which profiteth little or nothing,
 nothing to be sure comparatively speaking] is
profitable for all Things, having the Promise of this
Life, &c. [for it gives Chearfulness to the Spirits,
 and Marrow to the Bones, which, *cæteris paribus*,
 secures,

secures, and prolongs the Enjoyment, of this Life, CHAP.
 had there been no Commandment with *Promise of* III.
that Sort.] Besides, that daily Converse in *Spirit*,
 daily impresses a Sense of the *spiritual* Being, and
 Presence of God ; our continual Dependance upon,
 and Obligations to him, and sets them daily in
 Presence, and before the Face of our Understand-
 ing, Will, and Affections, as sensible Objects are
 daily before our Senses. Now all these are necessary
 for imprinting, and preserving the Sense and Sin-
 cerity, and for keeping up the Power of Religion,
 which is the Spirit of Power and a sound Mind in
 us ; as necessary to the good-liking and well-being
 of our Souls, as daily Bread and Breathing is to
 that of our Bodies.

AND because the Exercise and Discipline of
 that Duty is so efficacious for increasing our Vir-
 tues, and lessening our Transgressions, and Omis-
 sions ; that gives us, at once, the true Reasons
 of *Fervency* therein, and of the many Command-
 ments for its *Frequency*, attended always with that
 Fervency. *Fervency* makes the Impression of
 Godliness, and *Frequency* strikes it deeper. For
 the greater the Earnestness of Heart and Desire
 exerted towards the Things prayed for, in Op-
 position to Coldness and Indifference ; and the
 oftener it accompanies our Devotion, the more
 powerfully it produces those good Effects in us,
 which God, in Christ the Mediator, intended
 from it ; viz. to keep us in a State of continual
 Dependance upon him, through that Mediator,
 in a thorough Sense of our Weakness and Wants,
 and of his Mercy, his Fulness, and his Promises
 to supply all, through him.

THUS he grants to Importunity, in his Son's
 Name, and encourages it, not because it moves,
 or

CHAP. III. or makes a Change in him ; but as it repeatedly contributes to work in us, changeable Creatures, an Alteration for the better, and a more steady cleaving to our Calling in that Name that we call upon, and is called upon us. It is most apparent that the End and Appointment of Prayer was wholly and solely for our Benefit ; forasmuch as the Majesty of Heaven, to whom we address, is incapable of any Addition from any of his Creatures ; when we have done our best in that, and every other Respect, we are still but *unprofitable* Servants. And therefore there can be no other Inducement in God, to approve and require that incumbent Duty arising out of the State of our Wants, after Sin entered into the World ; but because it turns to our Advantage altogether, and is an improving Exercise of our Faculties, for meliorating them, and advancing us in Goodness, to render us more and more suitable Objects of his increasing Favour, and Loving-Kindness. And when we are careful to answer that End of Prayer, by growing better in the Use of it, and proceeding to the Perfection, our Nature in its present Imbecility is capable of, in performing the Religion of the End ; we certainly arrive at that Perfection, Happiness, and End, which God proposed from our Compliance with *that* Means of his own appointing.

AND as that Way of coming to God only through the *one* Mediator *Jesus Christ*, in *Spirit* and in *Truth*, in the *Spirit* of Adoption, and the *true* Mediator, is the only true Worship of God, ever since the Fall : Whatever differs from it, must be accounted either ignorant, false, or perverse Worship : as worshiping *without* a Mediator, the Case of *Jews* ; *Mahometans* ; and *Deists*
in

in a Christian Country. Or Idolatrous, or in an idolatrous Manner, when by *any other* than the one Lord and only true Mediator ; whether *thro'* one, or many Lords Mediators, to *one* supreme God, much diversify'd ; as some of the Pagans applied to one Supreme under one Name, some under another ; some to one Mediator, some to another, (though at the first Introduction of Idolatry, the Idols or Images were erected not to the supreme God, but to their several *Mediators* only * :) Or by any other *in Conjunction* with the true

* *Vid. Prideaux's Letter to the Deists*, pag. 146. &c. *Id. Connell.* pag. 177. The Passage from this last Book of that learned Author is worthy to be laid before the Reader. " The true Religion which *Noah* taught his Posterity, was " that which *Abraham* practised ; the worshipping of one " God, the supreme Governor, and Creator of all Things, " with Hopes in his Mercy through a *Mediator*. For the " Necessity of a Mediator between God and Man, was a general Notion, which obtained among all Mankind from the " Beginning. For being conscious of their own Meanness, " Vileness and Impurity, they could not conceive how it was " possible for them, of themselves alone, to have any Access " to the all-holy, all-glorious, and supreme Governor of all " Things. They considered him as too high and too pure ; " and themselves too low, and polluted, for such a Converse : " And therefore concluded there must be a Mediator, by " whose Means only they could make any Address unto him, " and by whose Intercession alone, any of their Petitions could " be accepted of. But no clear Revelation being then made " of the Mediator whom God had appointed, because, as yet, " he had not been manifested to the World, they took upon " them to address unto him by Mediators of their own chusing. " And their Notion of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, being, that " they were the Tabernacles, or Habitations of Intelligences, " which animated those Orbs in the same manner, as the Soul " of Man animates his Body, and were the Causes of all their " Motions, and that these Intelligences were of a middle Nature between God and them ; they thought these the properest Beings to become Mediators between God and them. " And therefore the Planets being the nearest to them of all " these

CHAP. true Mediator; or worshipping the Mediator in
 III. the tiny *Image* of a *Wafer*, as in *Papish* Coun-
 tries.

THUS

“ these heavenly Bodies, and generally looked on to have the
 “ greatest Influence on this World, they made Choice of them
 “ in the first Place, for their Gods-Mediators, who were to
 “ mediate for them with the Supreme God, and procure from
 “ him the Mercies and Favours, which they prayed for, and
 “ accordingly they directed Divine Worship unto them as such.
 “ And here began all the *Idolatry*, that hath been practised
 “ in the World. They first worshipped them *per Sacella*, that
 “ is, by *their Tabernacles*, and afterwards by Images also. By
 “ the first, they meant the Orbs themselves.—And there-
 “ fore when they paid their Devotions to any one of them,
 “ they directed their Worship towards the Planet, in which
 “ they supposed the Intelligence dwelt. But the Orbs, by
 “ their Rising and Setting, being as much under the Horizon,
 “ as above, they were at a Loss how to address to them in
 “ their Absence: To remove this, they had Recourse to the
 “ Invention of *Images*, in which, after their Consecration, they
 “ thought these Intelligences, or inferior Deities, to be as
 “ much present by their Influence, as in the Planets them-
 “ selves; and that all Addresses to them were made as effect-
 “ tually before the one, as before the other. And this was the
 “ Beginning of Image Worship among them.—Hence we
 “ find *Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Apollo, Mercury, Venus*, and
 “ *Diana*, to be first ranked in the Polytheism of the Ancients:
 “ For they were their first Gods. After this, a Notion ob-
 “ taining that good Men departed, had a Power with God
 “ also to mediate and intercede for them, they deified many
 “ of those, whom they thought to be such, and hence the
 “ Number of Gods increased in the idolatrous Time of the
 “ World. This Religion first began among the *Chaldeans*,
 “ which their Knowledge in Astronomy helped to lead them
 “ to. And from this it was, that *Abraham* separated himself,
 “ when he came out of *Chaldea*: From the *Chaldeans* it spread
 “ itself over all the *East*, where the Professors of it had the
 “ Name of *Sabians*. From them it passed into *Egypt*, and
 “ from thence to the *Grecians*, who propagated it to all the
 “ Western Nations of the World.—These *Sabians*, in con-
 “ secrating their Images, used many Incantations to draw
 “ down into them, from the Stars, those Intelligences, for
 “ whom they erected them, whose Power and Influence, they
 “ held,

THUS as Prayer actuates the Religion of the
 End, and promotes Repentance; so Faith in
Christ the only sufficient Mediator, as built upon
 the Foundation of his being Son of *God*, and Son
 of *Man*, animates Man's Access unto God, and
 invites his Application to the Throne of Grace,
 with an Assurance of being well received for his
 Name Sake. Whatever is the Want or Subject
 of Petition, the NAME of *Christ* interposing is
 the recommending Argument, why it is grant-
 ed, or accepted; and his Intercession is all in all
 for gaining the Blessing. Thus the Prophet, *Hos.*
xiv. 2. foretold, *Take with you WORDS, and*
turn to the Lord, say unto him, take away all Ini-
quity and receive us graciously; so will we render the
Calves of our Lips. Ever since he has graciously
 vouchsafed to lend his Disciples his prevailing
 Name, Prayer becomes a Key for opening the
 Kingdom of Heaven, and is one * of the Keys
 of the Kingdom of Heaven given to them; as
 Remission of Sins enlivening Repentance, is the
 other Key. And as neither of those Keys could
 do any Thing in opening the Kingdom of Hea-
 ven without *Christ*, to whomsoever he was pleased
 first to give the Knowledge of himself, in the Re-

“ held, did afterward dwell in them. And from hence the
 “ whole foolery of *Telefms*, which some make so much ado
 “ about, had its Original.—The other Sect of Idolaters,
 “ in the Eastern Countries, were the *Magians*; they abomi-
 “ nating all Images, worshipped God only by Fire,” &c.
8vo. Edit. The same true Notion of *Idolatry* is firmly esta-
 blished in *King's Critical History of the Creed*, pag. 58, &c.
 And that the original Constitution, Nature, mediatorial Office,
 and Worship of *Dæmons*, sprung from the primæval Tradition
 of the *Messiah*. See *Theoph. Gale, de ordu & progressu Philoso-*
phiae, pag. 682.

* Compare *Mat. xvi. 19.* with *Chap. xviii. 19, 20.*

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H

velation

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velation of himself to the World, they first confessing him to be *Christ*, (the Foundation of his Church) *first* receiv'd those Keys for their own Use, and to convey them to others for the equal Use of all that believed in him afterwards, thro' their Preaching and Writting; this would have follow'd of itself had our Lord made no such Declaration to his Apostles, nor used any Allusion to *Peter's* Name, a *Rock*.

How God would be worshipped and ador'd in a State of Innocence, was plain enough to human Reason; viz. by praising his Excellencies, and punctually keeping his Commandments. But when complicated Transgression enter'd upon the Lives of Men, and recoil'd back its Guilt upon their Reason, for having so often and grievously offended; their Worship was in a manner quite distanced and dissolved. Shame, Fear of Displeasure, Distrust of Acceptance, and anxious Thoughts, as to future Favour, are as natural to, and in a manner inseparable from, a *guilty* Mind in Presence of the heavenly Majesty, conscious of all its Misdeeds; as *Blushing* is to the Body, at the first Approach to an offended Superior here upon Earth. And what is Shame before God, but a conscious Sense of our many foolish and foul Practices in his Presence? Whilst Innocence knows neither Shame before, nor Fear of him. As Pain is the greatest Dread of human Nature, so Fear relative to it, is the strongest Passion: And if Punishment is but suspected to be the Consequence of Guilt (and Reason must be stupified if it does not firmly believe it where there is Law, and a Governor conscious of the Breach of it) all the natural, or moral Excellencies, or all the obliging Benefits of that Governor will never be considered,

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considered, or have any Effect, till the other Apprehension is first removed. This Uneasiness naturally begets an Inclination to Distance, and that Inclination produces a Neglect in coming, and that inures into a Habit, and that Habit would have completely thrown off all Worship to the Creator; and God must either have changed the Nature of Man, or relinquish'd the Homage of his Worship for the future, if he had not been pleased to step in to cheer the Heart, and raise up the Head of his desponding Votary.

Thus at the very first Transgression, the sneaking inherent *Shame* that springs from conscious Guilt, threw the first Pair into some *desired* Distance from God, that they might shun the Company of their Maker, which they were so lately fond of, as well as shewed an immediate Impairment of their Reason; from their inconsistent seeking a hiding Place from his *all-present* Majesty; and such a Dissatisfaction and Uneasiness in themselves also, that they did not care to look upon themselves or one another, as *they were* naked of the Innocence they were in before*.

H 2

And

* Thus the *Peacock*, when he has lost his *Tail*, the Glory of his Nature, constantly goes and hides himself. Inward Nakedness of Innocence made outward Nakedness first perceptible to be unclean; for as to the clean all things are clean, so to the unclean *that same* became unclean, and in a manner clandestine; adventitious Shame ever after remaining, for being the Instruments of propagating Persons obnoxious to future Guilt, and perturbation of Mind like themselves. Besides, how was this Nakedness of theirs ordained to be covered? Not with twisted Leaves of their own Invention; but with Skins of Beasts, (that even, by the Means of the Covering, their Shame might never be hid from themselves) whose Life and Blood was sacrificed to God by his own Appointment; to put them in mind of his Mercy and Reconcilableness.

CHAP. And they certainly had never sought after God
III. more, if he had not first graciously called to, and argued the Matter with them; denounced their Punishment in this World, and immediately acquainted them with the future Remedy provided for them, and all their Progeny.

THE Almighty therefore, to shew the Power of his Mercy unto Salvation, caused the Dawn of the *Hope* of all the World to arise, and dissipated the dark, dismal Cloud, with the Light of a *Promise* of one mighty to save, from the Seed of the Woman; who should be a Mediator and Intercessor for Peace, and Pardon, in their best Endeavours of serving God; as secure and suitable to God's Interest, as he was secure and suitable to the Interest of Man. And because God's Promises are the same Thing as Performance, should then take place, to have its comfortable Effects. And as a Testimony and Pledge thereof, *He instituted* Sacrifices to himself, the Morning Star of future Revelation, and of more explicit Christianity in the Fulness of Time; that as sure and as often as Man offered up one, he might assuredly depend upon the other. Thus the general World fell into Sacrifice, as an Act of Religion, till the *Death* of Christ upon the Cross, which is the *ultimatum* of all Sacrifices.

THAT all Kindreds, and People of the Earth from the Beginning of the World, and the Generality still to this Day, have applied, and do apply themselves to *bloody* Sacrifices, and relied upon them as the general Symbol or *Medium* of

ness in accepting the Death of *another*, in *figure*, in their stead, and for their Guilt in deserving irrevocably, what they saw the other actually suffer by their religious Hands.

the

the Worship of the Deity; ancient and modern History, and Travels abundantly inform us. Nor is there any Way of accounting how the whole World, with one Consent, in so many distant Oceans, came to fall into Agreement about such a strange Part, and seemingly *inhuman* Persuasion of Religion, as if *without shedding of Blood there was no Remission*; unless, in Fact, they received it, as they did their Blood, by Conveyance down from the Progenitor of our Race; who practised it by express Direction from Heaven, after the aforesaid Promise made. *Eusebius* very judiciously resolves, that this Way of Worship was not taken up by Chance, or by human Motion, *but suggested to them by a Divine Intimation*, Demonst. Evang. Lib. I. cap. 10. Κατὰ θεῖαν δ' ἐπινόειαν ὑποβεβλημένον. Which Promise preserv'd under such Pre-figuration was to be fulfill'd in due Time, by a solemn Oblation of the sacred Blood of some Person, who should receive his Humanity only from the Woman.

FOR a Man's destroying the Life of a Beast, and shedding its Blood, can never naturally signify a Man's Obedience to God; having no such Signification by the Dictates of the Law of Nature; it must therefore signify only *ex instituto*, and become a Sign of Obedience, or rather an Instance of the Obedience of *Faith*, in Virtue of a *positive* Law or Institution from God; which shews, that the offering expiatory or bloody Sacrifices, could never have its original from the Light of Nature, but from some *positive, additional* Declaration of the Will of God*. Thro'

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this

* Vid. Outram de Sacrific. pag. 10, 167, 244, 278. Concerning the first bloody or expiatory human Sacrifice offered as

CHAP. III. this *Faith* Abel offered a better Sacrifice than Cain. So far is it from being true, what some have lightly imagin'd, that Christianity occasionally conform'd its Notion of a Mediator to the general Belief of, and Application to Mediators,

as *λυτρον* among the Race of Idolatrous before the Flood. See *Bishop Cumberland's* learned Remarks on *Sanchoniatho's* *Phœnician Hist.* pag. 37, 137, 138, 170, 147. Whence he concludes, that *Dæmons* were worshipped by such Sacrifices before the Flood, when Idolatry was in its youngest Years. In the fifth Generation of the idolatrous Line of *Cain*, from *Adam*, there is mention of bloody Sacrifice of Beasts, pag. 239. When, as he probably infers, began "the eating of raw and bloody Flesh, which was therefore forbidden to *Noah* and his Posterity, both in the Case of Sacrifice and of ordinary Diet, to prevent all Correspondence with their savage Practices." That human Sacrifices were not learnt by the Heathen from *Abraham's* going about to sacrifice *Isaac*, but intended by God in the Issue of that Trial, to be discouraged by it, *Ibid.* pag. 139. &c. To this I subjoin a Passage from *Dr. Sherlock*, (now *Bishop of Salisbury*) *Use and Intent of Prophecy*, pag. 74. 3d Edit. "We read that *Cain* brought an Offering of the Fruit of the Ground, and *Abel* of the Firstlings of his Flock, and the Fat thereof: The Lord had Respect unto *Abel*, and to his Offerings; but unto *Cain*, and to his Offering he had no Respect. Allowing the Maxim of the Jewish Church to have been good from the first Institution of Sacrifice, that without Blood there is no Remission: The Case may possibly be this. *Abel* came a Petitioner for Grace and Pardon, and brought the Atonement appointed for Sin; *Cain* appears before God as a just Person wanting no Repentance; he brings an Offering in Acknowledgment of God's Goodness and Bounty, but no Atonement in Acknowledgment of his own Wretchedness. The Expostulation of God with *Cain* favours this Account; *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, Sin lieth at thy Door*, i. e. If thou art righteous, thy Righteousness shall save thee; if thou art not, by what Expiation is thy Sin purged? It lieth still at thy Door. Add to this that the Apostle to the *Hebrews* says, that *Abel's* Sacrifice was rendered excellent by Faith: What could this Faith be, but a Reliance on the Promises and Appointments of God? Which Faith *Cain* wanted, relying on his own Well doing."

in

CHAP. III. in the Religion of the *Gentiles*; that the Heathen Sacrifice, and Notion of a Mediator, had its Origin from a traditionary Usage of the one, and Belief of the Necessity of the other, from the first Infancy of the World, as has been shewn. Our Author, agreeably to his Principles, derives Sacrifices wholly from human Invention; and gives them so late, and so ridiculous a Date, pag. 79. that he is not worthy of a Refutation; every one that reads the Bible can confute him.

THEY sufficiently indeed corrupted it, nay to that extreme Abuse in multiplying those who were no Gods; and after they had given them Being, serving and worshipping them so irrationally and stupidly, that the Service and Worship might be call'd that of those who were, in a manner, no Men. Instead of honouring Him, whom they professed to know as God, from the Works of Creation, they were so vain and abounding in their Imaginations of all Sorts of impious Rites, that they prophan'd him, and made a Devil of him. For as *Honor est in Honorante*, whether they intended to worship Devils or not, the Worship was such as became no other, and therefore it belong'd to them, and they claim'd it as their own.

NAY, the wise Philosophers themselves communicated in those Scenes of Absurdity and Immorality. Many of them by long Train of Thought, had more sublime and purer Notions of the Deity, and of the Worship suitable to Him; But what was the World the better for that? As long as they continued in Fact, like the rest, in notorious Immorality and Breach of

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the Law of Nature, in not respecting and honouring God as He is, and as they plainly knew Him to be; the greatest, certainly, of all Immorality, as being the Cause of most other Wickedness. So far were they from vindicating the Honour of the supreme Being, or bringing a Reformation into the World, by rooting out the first leading Principle of Vice, wrong Notions, and vicious Worship of God; that they, every where, countenanced and complied with the established Dishonour and Contumely against Him; they were strictly Partakers of so much known Iniquity, by being actually guilty of it, and promoting the same in others by their Example. The chief of them, *Plato* and *Cicero*, encourag'd the Magistrate, and civil Powers, by recommending it in their respective Plan of Laws; and so got the Iniquity every where established by Law*.

AND

* *Laëtant. de falsa Rel. Lib. I. cap. 15. speaking of Cicero, says thus, de legibus, quo in opere Platonem secutus de religione ita sanxit. Divos & eos, qui cælestes semper habiti sunt, colunto.* The same Author, Lib. II. cap. 3. *de Origine Erroris, reproaches him for it in a beautiful Strain of Eloquence.* Intelligebat *Cicero* falsa esse, quæ homines adorarent: Nam cum multa dixisset, quæ ad everfionem religionum valerent: Ait tamen non esse illa vulgo disputanda, ne susceptas publice religiones diputatio talis extinguat. Quid ei facies, qui, cum errare se sentiat, ultro ipse in lapides impignat, ut populus omnis offendat? Ipse sibi oculos eruat, ut omnes cæci finit? Qui nec de aliis bene mereatur, quos patitur errare; nec de seipso, qui alienis accedit erroribus; nec utitur tandem sapientiæ suæ bono, ut factis impleat, quod mente percepit: Sed prudens & sciens pedem laqueo in'erit, ut simul cum cæteris, quos liberare ut prudentior debuit, & ipse capiatur? Quin potius, si quid tibi *Cicero* virtutis est, experire, populum facere sapientem: Digna res est, ubi omnes eloquentiæ tuæ vires exeras. Non enim verendum est, ne te in tam bona causa deficiat oratio; qui sæpe etiam malas copiose, ac fortiter defendisti. Sed nimirum

AND the first Advice in the best of their practical Catechisms* is, to worship the Gods in the first Place, but then it is, according to the manner it is establish'd by Law, i. e. of the City, or Country where you are; which, by the way, vied with one another in bringing the most Absurdity, Obscenity, and Profanation, into the Worship of their respective Gods; sometimes one God being in favour with them, and sometimes another. So great a Corruption and Infatuation does Idolatry superinduce upon human Reason, where it is receiv'd, that to this Day, the politest Part of the Heathen World, the *Chinese* and *Japonese*, are rather, according to the Account of Travellers, more guilty of the Excesses and Absurdities of it, than the grosser and more ignorant Parts; as if it was a standing Maxim, the more Fools they made their Gods, the wiser were the Worshipers.

No Wonder therefore, since all manner of Encouragement was given to the Corruption of

nimirum *Socratis* carcerem times; ideoque patrociniū veritatis suscipere non audes. At mortem, ut sapiens, contemnere debuisti. Et erat quidem multo pulchrius, ut ob bene potius dicta, quam ob maledicta morereris: Nec tibi laudis plus *Philippiæ* asferre potuerunt, quam discussus error humani generis, & mentis hominum ad sanctitatem tua disputatione revocata. Sed concedamus timiditati; quæ in sapiente non debet. Quid ergo ipse in eodem versaris errore; Video te terrena, & manufacta venerari; vana esse intelligis; & tamen eadem facit, quæ faciunt ipsi, quos ipse stultissimos confiteris. Quid igitur profuit, vidisse se veritatem, quam nec defensusurus esset, nec secuturus? The Reader will excuse so much about *Cicero*, if it is considered our Author makes him not only the Model of his Opinions, but the Pattern of his Writing, by Way of Dialogue, against the prevailing Absurdities and Superstition of his Countrymen. See his Preface.

* Νόμος ὁς δίδωκεται, Τίμα. Pythag.

Worship,

CHAP. III. Worship, that an universal Corruption of Manners was the Consequence of it. If the Fountain is impure and polluted, the Streams must be so of Course. It was a cunning devised Apology, to impute the Weakness and Vices of human Nature to the adorable Gods, the better to justify themselves in them; but who, that believ'd them to be such in reality, could arrive at being better themselves? If Lewdness was the common Ceremony of Worship, and Vice an intimate part of their Religion, it must be an Ornament, instead of Disgrace to their Lives and Conversations, and shew forth so much the more of God and his Religion.

IN short, all the Worshippers might acquit, or rather applaud themselves in their Irregularities, from the same Patronage of *Jupiter*, the Fellow makes use of in *Terence* *; so natural, and withal, sacred is the Argument to all, who believe *Imitation* of the Deity a principal Part of Religion and Homage: If the *Thunderer* does so and so, why am not I, a little Fellow and his humble Votary, authoriz'd to do as he does? If the supreme *Jupiter*, who is, or ought to be, an Example to Gods and Men, shews his Almightyness in rakish Frolicks and Debaucheries, why should not my Weakness be excused? Why should I pretend to be better than my Principles? Or think of exceeding the Principal of all the Gods and Goddesses in Modesty or Morality? No, but I will love and obey him in those Things, as far as I am able, with all my

* *Quod fecit is qui Templa Cæli summa sonitu concutit, Ego Homuncio hoc non facerem? Ego illud vero ita feci, ac lubens.* And St. *Austin* has rightly observ'd, *Magis intuentur quid Jupiter fecerit, quam quid docuerit, Plato, vel censuerit Cato.* C. D. Lib. II.

Heart,

Heart, with all my Soul, with all my Strength. CHAP. III. If the Religion of the Means, Prayer and Worship, which should be the Cure, together with Repentance, for recovering Men to the Religion of the End, is become the Disease, and the *Devil* is the Director of Conscience, how languishing and deplorable must have been the Condition of Mankind? How could it be otherwise, but that the whole World must have lain in Wickedness at the coming of our *Saviour*?

WHO therefore came at the fittest Juncture of universal Peace in the World, (the *Roman* Empire also then having the widest Spread of Dominion over the Earth, for the Convenience of propagating his Religion far and near; and then also were Arts and Sciences, and human Reason, at their highest Improvements, the greatest Curiosity after Truth joining and spreading itself every where, for the better proving, sifting, and examining into this new Religion) and at the greatest need, to destroy the Works of the Devil; who had usurp'd and reign'd, as God, over the Idolaters of this World; his Works of Idolatry and Superstition, to which he had enslav'd the Nations, were accordingly dissipated, and disappear'd before his Religion, as Darkness when the Light approaches. To the Glory of Christianity, it cleansed away that Sink of Wickedness, and cast out the greatest the devoutest Hindrance of all Good, that worst Corruption of all Morals, in the first place; and then shewed the more excellent Way, to repent of their Sins, and worship God in Spirit and Truth, the true Mediator *Jesus Christ*, and taught them all other Righteousness.

THEN

THEN vanished Sacrifices, the Reason of them ceasing; and none remain'd acceptable to God, but the *presenting our Bodies*, in Opposition to the dead Works of Drunkenness, Fornication and Impurities which defecrated the Body, in the Heathen Worshiper, *a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is our reasonable Service* *; placing the Service of the Body in the Reverse of what the Heathens thought Reason, Duty, and Devotion; and the *doing good and communicating* to the Needs of others, which is *well pleasing* to him †. Then ceased very many abominable Practices against the Law of Nature; and sober, righteous, godly Living, the End of the Gospel, flourished in great Plenty; and still flourishes, in Comparison of the Behaviour of those who were, or still are Strangers to the Gospel of Christ. Therefore,

THE Spite of our Author against Christianity, is equal to his Falshood, in asserting ‡ the Lives of Christians no better, but rather worse than Pagans. He might have seen in a Book ¶ he ought not to be a Stranger to, as a *Civilian*, a long Catalogue of innumerable gross Corruptions of the Law of Nature current in the World, which *Christendom* is free from. His Accusation is not only contrary to Matter of Fact, but to the Reason of Things. For some may be worse than their Religion, and no Fault in their Religion neither, but in themselves, for Want of complying with its Directions. But how are any, how can ever any be capable of being better

* Rom xii. 1.

† Heb. xiii. 16.

‡ Page 366.

¶ Puffend. of the Law of Nature, &c. pag. 126.

than

than their Religion? How bad that was, has been shewn. If the *Principles* of a Man are depraved, his Practice must be the same, as consequently as an Effect follows a Cause. It is inconsistent moreover with a favourite Principle of our Author, "That Christianity is neither more nor less than the Republication of the Law of Nature." If so, then the Lives of Pagans and Christians must be the same, being governed by the self-same Law; and so he equally acquits, or equally accuses both. But let the Comparison be fairly erected between the Philosophers of one, and the Philosophers of the other; the middle Sort of one, with the like of the other; the lower Vulgar of one, with their Peers of the other, and the Difference will soon appear.

ALL the three Degrees of the former were equally involved in, and defiled with Idolatry, of which all the other three, who conform to the Scriptures, are clear. Their Philosophers, who should have been the Reformers of the Age, being the natural Prophets and Teachers of it, not only connived at, but did what they could to promote, and against their Conscience too, all manner of Ungodliness, and recommend the grand Corruption, the generating Cause of all other Corruption, false, impious, and abominable Notions, and Sentiments of their Gods; though from visible Effects, they *knew God* the first Cause and Author of all Things, and, by the Light of Nature, knew him to be a *Spirit*, yet worshipp'd him not as such; but jumbled him with the Silver, Gold, or Stone they created him out of; they *glorified him not as God*, but debased and deposed him with filthy, beastly, blasphemous Rites, by regularly conforming themselves to the publick Service

CHAP. Service and Worship: And so the *Seeing* led the

III. Blind into the Ditch, and fell into it themselves. They were *Hereticks* with a Witness against God and his Religion, by doing what they did, *self-condemned*. What they would not, that they did, and what they hated and laughed at, that did they; and not so much from the Instigation of fleshly Appetites, as out of a mean Pusillanimity and servile Fear, as great an Immorality and Reproach, as can be imputed to a Philosopher. For they boasted of *Fortitude*, as the Head of their cardinal Virtues, but would not bear the aching of a Finger for the Cause of God, and the Promotion of the Religion of Nature. It is a vulgar Error, that *Socrates* himself*, though the best of the Bunch, and the most extraordinary Person that ever lived among them, died a Martyr for the Belief of one only God, for he held many, at least, and his last dying Order was a Sacrifice to *Æsculapius*†.

BEHOLD the Happiness, or moral Virtues of the *Stoicks*, a *bonum theatrale*, to be seen of Men! having no Eye to, nor Intention of serving God, with whom they equalled their wise Man, and therefore they had their Reward, in this Life,

* See *Cudworth's Intel. Syst.* pag. 401.

† Besides his Apologist, *Xenophon* in his *memorable Things*, declares of him, "That he never gave any other Answer to those who enquired of him in what manner they ought to sacrifice to the Gods, than that every one should observe the Customs of his Country. Thus, in all Actions of Piety, *Socrates* took particular Care to do nothing contrary to the Custom of the Republick, and advised his Friends to make that the Rule of their Devotion to the Gods, alledging it to be an Argument of Superstition and Vanity, to dissent from the establish'd Worship." And *Epictetus*, *ch. xxxviii.* gives the like Advice, *κατὰ τὴν πάτριαν*.

such

such as it was, the Praise of Men. Vain-Glory was their Heaven; they are rightly stiled *animalia gloria*: All Sects and Degrees pursued Praise and Glory, with all their Strength, with all their Mind, and with all their Soul; to the Impulse of that Principle was owing all the worthy Achievements in War, or Peace, the Labours of the Brain, and of the Body: That served them, instead of certain Immortality; they were pleased with it as a sovereign good. They were elevated at the Thoughts of gratifying this Vanity, and to be disappointed of it, was Death to them. It was Life, and every Thing, to reign *Head* of their own School, and *Founders* of their own Notions; and therefore inconsistent to become *Scholars* to Christianity, or any differing Truth, tho' ever so certain*.

AMBITION, Revenge, Self-murder, were the Gallantries of human Nature; Meekness, Humility and Patience, its Pusillanimity and Meanness. And, at their languishing Hour, that flat rueful Consolation may be presumed, from the Confession of an Hero, to have been general among them: *Te colui, virtus, ut rem; ast tu nomen inane es.*

PIETY towards God, which gives Sincerity, Reality, and Being to the human Virtues, was little thought of, and much less cultivated. The most regular System, *Aristotle's Eth.* is observed to have no other Scope, but to advance the Tranquillity and Welfare of civil Life. How should they practise Humility, when they knew not

* *Homines gloriae & eloquentiae solius libidinosi.* Tert. Apol. cap. 47.

what

CHAP. III. what it meant? But when we read the Christian Precepts of that, and Meekness, *quem philosophum non contemnimus?* Cicero's Exception to his Advice of doing good, *nisi laceffitur injuria**, gave a full Scope to Revenge, and the Retaliation of any Injury †; nay, private Revenge was practised as Virtue, and had the same Respect paid to it. Uncleanliness and Fornication was as common as Meat and Drink, and reckoned full as lawful; Marriage was ridiculed by *Epicurus* and *Democritus* then (Vid. *Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. II.*) as it is now by the *Deists* and *Libertines*. The *Platonists* could see no Sin in *Adultery*, being taught the Lawfulness of the Community of Wives ‡: Neither could there be any Restraint from *Polygamy*, unless from the Laws of the State; being destitute of the Principle of Reasoning from the Nature of Things, viz. the first Creation of but one Woman for one Man: Masculine Love was applauded by the most celebrated, *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Xenophon*, *Æschines*, &c. (Vid. *Plut. de Lib. educand. & Cic. Tusc. Q. Lib. IV.*) and for that Reason endeavoured lately to be brought on the Stage of Practice by the loose Principles of *Deists*. Nor was exposing innocent Children to Death, any Cruelty with many of them; nor the Immolation of human Blood at the Altars of many of their Gods, any Scruple with any of them, but rather conscientious Acts of Devotion, which occasioned that Lampoon, *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum*.

* *Off. Lib. III. Vid. Last. Lib. IV. cap. 18. a Dissertation upon that false Virtue.*

† And his Practice was agreeable to his Doctrine, *Odi bo-minem, et odere, utinam ulcisci possim*, *Epist. ad Attic. Lib. IX.*

‡ *De Repub. Lib. VI.*

Now,

Now, if we compare the middle Sort of Christians with these vain-glorious Philosophers; how very much more do they know? How much better do they practise? They have the Virtue, which the other wanted, to propagate the true Knowledge of God, and his Perfections; of his Mercy, and of his Methods moreover in *Christ Jesus* for reforming, and saving the World. And having a Zeal according to their Knowledge of that excellent Way to Happiness, they travel into distant Regions, to communicate it to others.

As to the lower Sort, even they exceed the Pagan Philosophers, much more others, in many Things; the *Cobblers* and *Porters* in Protestant Countries, who can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and are further instructed in the *Christian* Catechism, have a better System of Knowledge, and Duty, than all the Heathen Philosophers of whatever Denomination put together. It is short and suitable to them whose Business is the Drudgery of Life; whilst the Lectures and Books of the other were tedious, complicated, fine-spun Reasonings, above the Comprehensions of their Vulgar, and therefore could never be of any Use to their Practice. The Immortality of the Soul is a fix'd Principle with our Vulgar, but the wise Men of the other, the more they reasoned, the more they confirmed themselves and others in Doubt concerning it. Their *breve itur per fidem* is more directory, and comfortable, than all the others innumerable, intricate Volumes about Happiness. They can sing to the Praise and Glory of God, whilst the other had nothing but drunken, lewd

VOL. I.

I

Songs

CHAP. III. Songs to *Bacchus, Cybele, Flora, &c.* The Ploughman has an Argument to confide in for the *Resurrection* of the Body, viz. the annual burying of his Corn in the Earth out of Sight, and soon after in his Sight, rising again to Improvement *; absurd impossible Belief to Heathen Philosophers! Our Author could not but know of the many Fountains of Knowledge opened gratis, in the *Charity* Schools of these Dominions, as a Publick Pledge, of the better Lives of the common Sort: And a pleasing Ratification, how much an indifferent Knowledge of profitable Things is more valuable, than a perfect Knowledge of unprofitable ones. What if the Lives of some common Seamen among Christians, who visit Heathen Nations, are pretty equal, perhaps, to the common Seamen of Pagans: They are so much upon another Element, and distant so long together from publick Instruction, that it is no Wonder, these forget, what the other never learn'd.

AND as to the modern Pagans of *China* exceeding Christians in their Lives and Conversation, his Authorities don't prove it. *Bishop Kidder's* Words are a rhetorical Stretch, usual in Dissuaves from Vice, like that in *Isaiab*, "*The Ox knows his Owner, &c.* but my People are less considerate and grateful than they:" The sole Scope of his Words is, to shame some Christians out of their bad Lives, by the better Lives that some Heathens lead; which may be very true; but they conclude not generally. He introduces

* Our Author, pag. 185. turns this against Christianity: But see his profound Ignorance in natural Philosophy, handsomely exposed by Mr. *Jackson*, in his Answer to this Author, cap. 26.

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CHAP. III. Monsieur *Leibnitz* to the like Purpose; and Part of what he says, must bear the like Construction: Our Author brings him in as a great Statesman, and the first Passage he produces is, *Dici enim non potest, quam pulchre omnia ad tranquillitatem publicam, ordinemque hominum inter se, ut quam minimum sibi ipsi incommodent, supra aliarum gentium leges apud sinenses sint ordinata.* This seems to be the Key of all such Commendations of those People; extending no farther than their Human Virtues, which the Excellency of the Laws of that polite Nation has secured the publick Observance of. Though they are the best apprized of that essential Obligation Nature has imposed upon Mankind of filial Piety, Deference of the Inferior to the Superior, and of the Junior to the Elder Brother, and are the best Practicers of the same of all known Nations in the World (being in reality the Ligament of their State, the Ground of all their other Laws, and the Basis of the long Continuance of their most ancient Monarchy; yet, as all are agreed, they are the most insatuated Idolaters, who ever had any thing, who can say any thing for their rational Piety towards God? Or right Notions of him? Or their worshipping him free from Idolatry, as the Light of Nature dictates? And what other Foundation can be laid, for a Life and Conversation according to the true Law of Nature? As to *Navaret*, he, like some other Travellers, writes in the marvellous Stile, and certainly exaggerates: But other Travellers (*Le Comte* is one, as I remember) give them no such favourable Character, but represent them the greatest Cheats in the World; far greater Artists at it than Christians, than the *Genoese* themselves; glorying in every Quirk and Artifice of that kind, as a laudable

I 2

Argument

CHAP. III. Argument of *Superiority of Understanding*, in case they are not found out; if they are, then they are only Fools; but no manner of natural accusing Remorse for the *Disbonesty*, never once allow themselves to be *Knaves*; and he gives several Instances of it to his own Knowledge.

OUR Author is the fonder of this Peoples Character, because almost every Travel represents their *Literati*, *alias* Magistrates, universally addicted to *Atbeism*. As to the Corruptions in *Worship*, *Doctrine*, and *Practice* of the present Heathen World, See *Bishop of London's Second Past. pag. 33.*

AND because the *moral* Character of the *Turks*, is so apt to be extoll'd beyond that of Christians, by such Christians as our Author, it may be proper to subjoin an authentic Character of them likewise, given by a judicious Person, well acquainted with them. His Words are these " I shall only tell you at present, that I think they [the *Turks*] are very far from agreeing with that Character which is given of them in Christendom; especially for their exact Justice, Veracity, and other moral Virtues.—But I must profess myself of another Opinion: For the Christian Religion, how much soever we live below the true Spirit and Excellency of it, must still be allow'd to discover so much Power upon the Minds of its Professors, as to raise them far above the Level of *Turkish* Virtue. 'Tis a Maxim I have often heard from our Merchants, that a *Turk* will always cheat when he can find an Opportunity.—Their Religion is framed to keep up great outward Gravity and Solemnity, without begetting the
" least

CHAP. III. " least good Tincture of Wisdom or Virtue in the Mind. You shall have them at their Hours of Prayer (which are four a Day always) addressing themselves to their Devotions with the most solemn and critical Washings, always in the most publick Places, where most People are passing; with most lowly and most regular Prostrations, and a hollow Tone; which are amongst them the great Excellencies of Prayer. I have seen them in an affected Charity give Money to Bird-catchers (who make a Trade of it) to restore the poor Captives to their natural Liberty; and at the same time hold their own Slaves in the heaviest Bondage. And at other Times they'll buy Flesh to relieve Dogs and Cats; and yet curse you with Famine and Pestilence, and all the most hideous Execrations. They know hardly any Pleasure but that of the sixth Sense. And yet with all this they are incredibly conceited of their own Religion, and contemptuous of that of all others, which I take to be the great Artifice of the Devil, in order to keep them his own. They are a perfect visible Comment upon our Lord's Description of the *Jewish* Pharisees. In a Word, Lust, Arrogance, Covetousness, and the most exquisite Hypocrisy, complete their Character. The only Thing that ever I could observe to commend them in, is the outward Decency of their Carriage, the profound Respect they pay to Religion, and to every Thing relating to it, and their great Temperance and Frugality." *Maunderell's Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem. Second Edit. Letter at the End. In comparison of either Heathens or Turks, that of 2 Esd. iii. 34, &c. may be justly applied to Christendom, Weigh thou therefore*
I 3

CHAP.
III.

therefore our Wickedness now in the Balance, and theirs also that dwell in the World, and so shall thy Name no where be found, but in Israel. Thou shalt find, that Israel by Name hath kept thy Precepts, but not the Heathen.

BEFORE I leave the natural Religion of the Means, it may be observed, that all the Corruptions that are, or have been, in Religion Natural, or Religion Christian, have entered at the Door of the Means Natural, or the Means Christian. How many Corruptions and Superstitions has the Church of Rome brought in, to the utter Abuse, and to the little or no Effect, of the Evangelical Doctrine of Repentance? Their Sacrament of Penance; a bodily Exercise which the Apostle assures profiteth nothing; their auricular Confession to a Priest, and his Soul-deceiving Absolution by his own Authority; an enchanted, pleasing Circle of sinning and confessing, without ever parting with their Sin, but going on cheerfully upon a fresh Score, having paid their Reckoning for the former; thus the Laity, parting with their Secrets, throw the Reins of Government into their Priests Hands. Their Doctrine of Attrition, of mortal and venial Sins; of Merit, Works of Supererrogation; of Indulgencies, Jubilees, Purgatory: These Inventions and Commandments of Men are the more shameful, as they are calculated purely for filthy Lucre, and worldly Grandeur. Never was this Key of the Kingdom of Heaven, which every Christian has the free Use of, (whilst those gross Pretenders to Dominion over Faith and Conscience assume the sole keeping of it) so merchandized for Profit and Deceit: As it is the profound Policy of that Church, to throw out its Net to bring in all those, who would gladly enjoy

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III.

joy their Sins in this World, and yet abate nothing of their Hopes of Heaven to the last, it can be no wonder, that such an agreeable Cozenage of Conscience should continue so long, or gain so much Ground, there being so very many in the World ready to abet and favour such Principles.

WITH respect to the other Means, Prayer and Worship, Baptism and the Lord's-Supper, their superstitious and idolatrous Innovations, seem calculated for putting out the Eyes, and blinding the Understanding of their People, as well as perverting the right Notions of God, and their Saviour. Such is Transubstantiation, Adoration of the Host, Sacrifice of the Mass, Prayer to Saints and Angels, Use of Images, Prayer in an unknown Tongue, extreme Unction. The Infallibility of their Pope, or Church, and some other depending Doctrines, seem to be devised for the Infatuation of those, that are, or would be subject to it.

IN short, if similar Causes produce similar Effects, and their Superstition and Idolatry is parallel * to the Superstition and Idolatry of the Heathens, What a dangerous State must they be in? What Corruption of Morals must abound? There is another Inconvenience: on the Side of Europe, they chiefly border upon the Turks; which gives the Musselmens so wrong a Notion of Christianity, having hardly any other Opportunity to converse with it, as to prejudice them the more from embracing it. That there should be Deists many in Popish Countries is not at all

* See Dr. Middleton's late Book on that Subject.

CHAP. III. to be admired at; it would be stranger if there were not. As there must be many Persons of good Discernment, they can never seriously believe, that so much Pomp and Pageantry, so very many Absurdities in Worship, so great a Traffick, and so much usurped Authority for the Remission of Sins, could ever come from God, or be his true Religion. Such may appear Catholick outwardly, by conforming sometimes to the publick Religion, whilst their *inward* Religion is, *sit anima mea cum philosophis*, as one declared upon a like Occasion*; and they may comfort themselves that the Religion of Nature is much *more Catholick* than the other; though in many Places it happens, in fact, to have as many Corruptions and Deviations from the Law of Nature, as the other has from the Law of Christianity.

BUT that a Deist, whose professed Religion is Reason, should venture to appear, should openly plume himself in a *Protestant* Country, under the very Meridian of Light and Truth, where Faith and Reason go hand in hand; where the purest Dispensation of the brightest Light of the Gospel flourishes, is not easy to be accounted for. Especially since those despised, exceptionable, positive Parts of Christianity, as they are called, *Baptism*, the *Lord's-Supper*, the Doctrine of the *Mediator Christ Jesus* for the Remission of Sins, and for the Worship of God, have nothing in them, as they are set forth in the New Testament, but what is most agreeable to sound Reason; most serviceable and beneficial in carrying on the End

* *Cum Christiani comedant quod colunt, si anima, &c. Averroes.*

CHAP. III. and the Means of the Religion of Nature, to the greatest possible Perfection; and of all Religions that have yet appeared in the World, the most promotive of the *Honour of God*, and the *Good of Men*, which is the grand *Criterion of true Religion*, to which our Author every where appeals*. In short, where false Means of Religion, or the true ones falsely applied, are depended upon, there Virtue and Religion will be two distinct Things; but where the true Means are truly and prudently made Use of, Religion and Virtue are one and the same Thing, having one and the same View, centering in the same Point. I shall now join Issue with him in that Appeal; and endeavour to evince to those of his Way of Thinking, That they do not come up to, nor are they led by their own Principle, *Reason*; nor ever will be, till they seriously and sincerely embrace and practise the Religion of *Christ*.

REPENTANCE and *Prayer* are the natural Means of bringing forth Fruits of a good Conversation, but *without Christ* influencing and operating upon them as known, or unknown, they are *dead*; without a vital Engraftment into him, *they can do nothing*. The greater Need therefore of *Faith* in him, and of *Baptism*, and the *Lord's-Supper*. The next Thing in order is to treat,

* Page 59.



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Of BAPTISM.

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IT will be proper to treat of this, and the Lord's-Supper, before I shew the Use and Application of them for carrying on the Religion of the End, and of the Means; and the wretched, ignorant Misrepresentations of our Author, concerning them.

AND first I premise a Definition of a *positive* Law from a Book * that must have been approved of by our Author. "*Positive* Law is "that which doth not by any Means flow from "the general Condition of Human Nature, "but from the sole Pleasure of the Lawgiver; "though these Laws ought likewise to have "their Reason and their Uses, in Reference to "that particular Society for which they were "enacted."

AFTER knowing the Way of Salvation, and believing in the *Lord Jesus*, that there is Remission of Sins, and Acceptance with God for us, thro' him, upon the Terms to be performed by us in the new Covenant, *viz.* Faith, Repentance,

* *Puffend.* of the Law of Nature and Nations, Lib. I. VI. 18. *pag.* 76.

and

and Obedience, according to the Gospel; and after weighing every Thing that we undertake, in the Manner that all wise and effectual Resolutions are made, follows a Resolution to undertake, and perform.

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FOR the better fixing and corroborating that Engagement, which gives on our Part, the Reason of our Hope, that we shall receive all the Privileges and Benefits of that good Profession; and forasmuch as some *Publick* and very *Solemn* Manner of taking on us that Engagement, and professing openly, before *Witnesses*, our full Purpose of Heart to *cleave stedfastly unto the Lord* *, would lay a *moral* inherent Obligation, and a *Publick* Character upon us, in a constant Readiness to work morally upon our Powers, and by Means thereof, "be a Kind of *moral Bridle* put "upon our Freedom of Action, so that we can- "not rightly take any other Way than what "we are thus guided to: Not that it can so far "restrain Mens Wills, as to render them unable "to steer another Course, though at their own "Peril †."

AND forasmuch as some outward visible *Symbols* of Initiation are most significative, and impressive for affecting us the more deeply, and so becoming morally instrumental in binding and rivetting the Engagement more firmly in us; agreeably to what is usual with Men, in solemn Engagements to God, or Man; to superadd to Words, *Symbolical Action*, as additional Obligation upon the Party engaging,

* *Act.* xi. 23.

† *Puffend.* Lib. I. *pag.* 60. of *moral* Obligation.

and

CHAP. IV. and covenanting; as *kissing the Book, holding up the Hand in an Oath, signing, sealing, and delivering in Deeds; delivering a Ring, joining Hands in Matrimony, &c.* It pleased our blessed Master to *institute* Baptism for that solemn Rite of Admittance into, and Profession of Christianity. And does not all the World allow it not only lawful, but, in the most important Duty, *expedient*; and therefore fit and reasonable, to *vow, covenant, and tie* ourselves by the most *sacred Bonds, Stipulation or federal Rite*, to perform well and truly, to the best of our Power, those Obligations, which were before our manifest Duty, and Interest to perform? And does not all the World acknowledge moreover, that a *positive* Engagement particularly enter'd into, and solemnly avowed for doing or forbearing any thing, is a *new adventitious* Band, and stronger Tie upon every Undertaker, than a simple *natural* Obligation to do, or forbear the same Thing? And does not the Scripture oblige to *Stedfastness*, and exhort to *hold fast the Profession of our Faith without wavering; to provoke one another to Love and good Works*; and not to *for sake the assembling of ourselves together*, in Consideration of this *Baptismal Engagement*; *having our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and our Bodies washed with pure Water*; And that we should abstain from *Sinning wilfully* any more? *Heb. x. 22, to 27.*

AFTER such a solemn Way of engaging and entering into the *open Profession* of performing, the Obligation to perform does thereby, in the Judgment of all Men, *ipso facto*, contract *new* Force, and superinduce *new* Power and *fresh* Reason upon us, even the *Morality of keeping*
Covenant,

CHAP. IV. *Covenant*, to be true to it; that it may become *indissoluble*, through the well-attested Act of our own Concurrence. Nor can the Conscience of a *Deist*, which he calls his *Honour*, gain say such good *Morality*. For as, in the Nature of Things, the true Method of learning and engaging oneself to a Course of Virtue, is to be untaught and disengaged from Vice, and *renounce* all the Friends, the Monitors, and the Ways of the latter, before he can effectually embrace the Party of the former, with its heavenly Leaders, Favourers, and holy Methods; so the Baptismal Engagement superinduces the indispensable Prudence of first *renouncing* all Hindrances, *the Devil and all his Works, &c.* because, otherwise, what follows would be to no Purpose; it could not otherwise possibly succeed in engaging to believe, and practise, under Laws, and in a Kingdom, the Reverse of the other. Thus the Party within us, Reason and Conscience, which every Man experiences to be on the Side of Virtue, is early called forth, solemnly enter'd and pre-engaged to the Service of God and Virtue, to strive, militate, and subdue under his Aid and Directions, that other Party within us, which all Men likewise feel to be on the Side of Vice and Irregularity. Thus Baptism *represents to us* the true State and Circumstances of human Nature, and our *Profession* grounded thereupon.

AND as the undertaking to perform is imputed to us *publickly*, does it not lay us under the more lasting Restraint not to break it, from the Dishonour and Disgrace of doing the contrary*? The Person, for Instance, who has received Mo-

* Thus it is urged and imputed to *Timothy*, 1 Tim. vi. 12.
ney

CHAP. IV. ney from one, who expects some Interest and Return suitable to the other's Opportunity of employing the Principal; and it is well known, that it is in his Power to make that Return to his Benefactor, and as well known that he is obliged in Reason so to do: Yet, after that Obligation has acquired new Force and stronger Influence, by being plainly entered and particularly specified in a *Bond and Covenant*, and he has as good as set his *Hand and Seal* to it, and *delivered* it as his *Act and Deed*, is there not evidently by that Means, a greater Security for Performance contracted by, and upon all, who think of that Bond and Engagement? And is not this, almost, the exact Case of Baptism, and its Stipulation, in Conjunction with its Suppletory Confirmation, as with most Christians?

THUS, as Circumcision, which, according to the universal Opinion of its Use, was a solemn Rite of *obliging* to all Things in the Law of *Moses* (couching under it the spiritual Circumcision of the Heart from the Lusts of the Flesh, &c.) left a Character upon the Flesh, being a *visible* Seal of that Temporary Covenant: So the other being no less a solemn Rite of obliging to all Things in the *new and better* Covenant, leaves its invisible Character, and lasting Impression upon the Soul and Mind, in Allusion to the other, called the Circumcision of the *Heart*; for acquitting ourselves, *bona fide*, of the religious Obligations lying upon us.

THE *positive* Law of Baptism obliges us now, therefore, upon a double Tie of two immutable Things; 1. That natural Law of standing to one's Covenant and Engagement: 2. Our Obligation

CHAP. IV. gation to obey the revealed Will of Heaven, where and when we know it to be a true Revelation; and that it plainly requires such a Method of Compliance from us, and for our Good only. Should any Revelation pretending to come from thence, offer to bind us generally to break any of the plain Laws of Nature, it would be a plain Imposture to our Reason; because one Truth cannot contradict another Truth: And we are in the *first* Place sure and certain, that the Laws of Nature came from the Maker of Heaven and Earth, and are necessarily true; whilst the *positive* Law from thence, for restoring us to Obedience to the other, through the Knowledge of the Mediator, is of later Date; and if it contradicts any previous moral Obligation must be necessarily false. But when we consider the *instituted* Part of Religion as grounded also in the Moral, *i. e.* in that which is secondarily good and moral, not merely in Virtue of its being commanded, but because it is moreover subservient to advance and perfect the natural Religion of the End, and of the Means, which result from the Relations, and from the peccant Condition we stand in by Nature; how serviceable, how sacred is the instituted Part of Christianity to the degenerate State of Man? How beneficial and good a Thing is Baptism?

IT is very expressive of the original Signification of the Roman *Sacramentum**, military Oaths of

* As soon as they listed, they swore they would obey the Consul, and not to stir any where without his express Permission: When they took their Rank in the Corps in which they were to serve, they swore they would not quit their Rank, but to charge their Enemy, and not return without conquering:

CHAP. IV. of Fidelity, to be true to their Colours and their leading Officer; to shew Valour against the Enemy; and Justice to all the World. And whereas we are so formed by Nature, as to be most strongly affected with visible Symbols, and sensibly impressed by outward Forms; the *Water* symbolically expresses, by *immersing* into it, the Death of Christ, or *being baptized into his Death**; *emerging* out of it, his Resurrection, and our Rising with him unto Righteousness: The Resurrection of the Body, seems also to be con-noted and confided in; that as Sin was the Occasion of its Mortality, our dying to that will give Life to the other; and become the Ground of our *glorifying God in our Body, as well as Spirit. Washing, sprinkling, cleansing*, emphatically signifies, and con-notes, That the *inward Man* is to be washed, the *Conscience* sprinkled or cleansed from the Guilt of Sin, and from the Foulness of a troubled Mind, by the *Blood of cleansing*, just as our Bodies are by the *Water*.

AND as those are the visible Properties of *Water, in rerum natura*, they are severally adopted to signify *ex instituto divino*, to witness, to pledge, to point out, to print upon the Mind the other invisible Effect and Impression intended to be left upon us. It is accordingly declared, that *Christ gave himself [to Death] for the Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of Water by the Word [of Truth,] able to*

ing: As soon as they were encamped, they swore to do no Injustice to any one, either in the Camp, or within a Mile round it. And were not these Oaths, so similar to the Christians Vows, the very Cause and Foundation of the Victories, and Successes of that People?

† Rom. vi. 3.

cleanse

CHAP. IV. cleanse and sanctify, as God's only Method of remitting Sins by the Mediator; collected therefore into a Compendium, or solemn Form at Baptism, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. To enable the better to produce that cleansing Effect ever after upon us, we are so solemnly initiated and dedicated by the *Water*, and by the *Word*: Which *Word* being from the *Holy Ghost*, makes the *new Birth of Water, and of the Spirit*, indispensibly necessary to *Entrance into the Kingdom of God**; that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, &c. †; for which Reason, we are exhorted after Baptism, to draw near with a true Heart, in full Assurance of Faith, having our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and our Bodies washed with pure Water ‡. But when and where the corresponding Effect answering to the outward and visible Sign of *Water*, and to the audible Form of *Words*, appropriated to that Occasion, viz. a clean Conscience, judiciously translated the Answer, or Stipulation, of a good Conscience towards God, does not follow and shew itself; we are told Baptism does not save us ||; and consequently, where it does follow, that it will save us; being the Method of God in several Scriptures of his Word, for entering us into Covenant with himself, through the Mediator, for Remission of Sin, Adoption, Access unto God, Assistance of the Spirit, and every Help, Motive, and Favour that can nourish us up to the Felicities of eternal Life.

THUS the outward and visible Sign, and Form in Baptism, the Seal of Adoption, and

* John iii. 5. called the washing of Regeneration, by the renewal of the Holy Ghost. Tit. iii. 5.

† Eph. v. 26, 27.

‡ Heb. x. 22.

|| 1 Pet. iii. 7.

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K

Righteousness

CHAP. Righteousness of Faith, (as was the Circumcision of *Abraham*) have a solemn moral Operation in causing in us the Effect that should always, but sometimes does not, follow, *the inward and spiritual Grace*, (the Soul's Covenant-State of Favour with God, as a Means whereby we receive the same, and a Pledge to assure us thereof) to assure us of *the Death unto Sin, and new Birth unto Righteousness*, incumbent upon our Engagements, begun and first born in that Ordinance, to grow up and advance forward to Maturity all the Days of our Life.

AND as there can be but *one Birth*, or first Beginning of a Thing, one solemn Entry or taking upon us to be his Disciples; that Engagement may nevertheless be often revised, and solemnly recognized in drinking the Cup or Blood of the *New Covenant* in the *Lord's-Supper*; therefore is there but *one Baptism*, the one only Way wherein our Mediator would have our Christian Calling begin, as there is but *one Lord*, through whose Rule over, and Intercession for us, there is Remission of Sins, &c. and *one Faith*, i. e. that he the one Lord, and he only, is the *one Mediator* between God and Man, in Opposition to the many Faiths among the Heathens, concerning this or that feigned Person, being the truest or best Mediator.

FROM that solemn Initiation into a *new Religion*, then taking a lasting Name upon us, this signifying, that we should be as ready to give a Reason of the Hope that is in us in the main Points of Belief, as to tell our Name; with respect to serving and pleasing God, old Things pass away, and all Things become a new State, consisting

CHAP. consisting of *new Principles of Life and Conversion*; very fitly called a *new Birth*, being born of God, *new Creatures, created in Christ Jesus*, to good Works. This is the Kingdom of Heaven's Method of being born of God, and taught of him, &c. *

THE *Jews*, baptizing their Profelytes of Justice, call'd it *παλεγγεσίαν*, or *λύτρον παλεγγεσίας*; the Reason was, because after Baptism they believed, the Profelyte had a new Disposition, enter'd upon new Manners, and a new Institute of Life. It was frequent to say, "a new baptized Profelyte was a new Infant." In that Baptism they changed their Name, nor would they acknowledge their Relations after the Flesh to be any more their Relations: *Tacitus* accordingly ridicules them for it, *Imbuuntur contemnere Deos; Patres, Fratres, cognatos tanquam res viles contemnere*, Lib. V. They commonly said, and any Doctor in *Israel* might easily have known it, "That except a Man was born of Water, he could not enter under the Wings of the Divine Majesty," i. e. a Profelyte could not enter into their Church and Covenant without being baptized: To this our Lord alludes, in his *verily*, *except a Man be born of Water and Holy Ghost, he cannot enter*, &c. †

THUS as Christianity was to go out from the *Jews* first unto all Nations, he adopted *their Baptism*

* A good Man, according to *Seneca de Provid.* c. 1. *Est Discipulus Dei, æmulator, & vera Progenies*; which in Scripture Phrase is, one taught of God, a follower of him, and born of him.

† *Lactantius*, Lib. IV. cap. 27. speaking of converted baptized Heathens accordingly says, *They came under the Wings of Jesus*.

tism with Improvements, into his Religion, when he was to exhibit his *παλεγγεσία*, or Manifestation of his new, and Death of the old Man; the whole Body of Sin *with* all its Members, dying with him to Sin by Immersion, and by Emerſion riſing with him to Newneſs of Life; Sons of God, and of the Reſurrection, that grand final *παλεγγεσία* to come; inſtead of their daily ceremonious *Baptiſms*, there ſhould be but *one* ſolemn initiating Baptiſm, affecting the Soul more than the Body. By which they became alſo Members of his *one* Body, or Church; *called out* from the reſt of the World, by the Preaching of the ſole Way of Remiſſion of Sins, Peace with God, and eternal Life through *Jeſus Chriſt*; and incorporated to have the Word always preach'd, and the Sacraments duly adminiſtered; *Children* of God by *Adoption*, *Heirs*, &c. Children of Grace, of that Grace, Mercy, and Peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in the Diſpenſation of his mediatorial Kingdom, by which we are ſaved, or have Remiſſion of Sins; the Earneſt, and the Seal of the Holy Spirit, and the Promise of eternal Life.

THIS *Grace*, or *Inſtitution*, or reveal'd Will of Heaven concerning the Mediator, and our State of Peace and Favour with God through him, is oppoſed to a State *by Nature**, wherein there is no Knowledge of God in Chriſt reconciling the World to himſelf, and conſequently for want of that explicit Knowledge, more under a State of *Wrath*, than Favour; being all their Life-Time ſubject to the Bondage of Mortality, under the inherent Contagion of *Death*, the Wrath of original Sin.

* *Eph.* xi. 3.

AND

AND becauſe the Knowledge of Chriſt as Mediator between God and Man, dying and interceding for the Remiſſion of Sins, is the chief Thing in the Goſpel, the chief Faith for ſupporting that, is his being Son of God, and Son of Man: Hence it is, that as Baptiſm is ſaid to be *into* the *Death* of Chriſt, ſo the making Diſciples to him is expreſſed * by *baptizing in*, or *into* the *Name of the Lord*, or *Lord Jeſus*, dying for us; a Part, and that the principal Part being put for the whole; though the Form of Baptizing might be *in the Name of the Father*, &c.

AND that being the *principal* Part of Diſcipleſhip, there is mention of Diſciples being *baptized for the Dead*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 29. Mr. *Locke* upon the Place confeſſes “ He knows not what “ this baptizing for the Dead means, but that it “ *ſeems* (ſays he) by the following Verſes to be “ ſomething wherein they expoſed themſelves “ to the Danger of Death.” That this is not only the ſeeming, but the *real* Meaning of this difficult Place, I apprehend may be made out thus. We read *Matth.* xx. 22, 23. *Mark* x. 38, 39. of *Baptized* in the Senſe of *Suffering*, *with the Baptiſm that I am baptized withal ſhall ye be baptized*: Why may not St. *Paul*, who had convers'd much, and travell'd long with St. *Mark*, uſe the Word in the ſame Senſe, when he is profeſſedly arguing from the *Sufferings* of Chriſtian Profeſſors both where he broke off the Argument, and where he reſumes the Thread of it, *ver.* after this? As if he ſhould ſay, Why then are we Apoſtles *immers'd* in Sufferings, for

* *Aa.* ii. 38. viii. 12, 16. x. 48. xix. 5.

CHAP. IV. the Sake of a dead, unrisen Saviour, and for the Hopes of a future Resurrection through him?

Why are we so incomparably unwise, to be actually so great Sufferers for that Cause, and why do we stand in Jeopardy of yet more Sufferings that await us? For my own particular, *I protest by your* (it should be as in the Margin, and as Dr. Mills retains it in the Text, *our*) *Rejoicing, I die daily*; a Succession of Perils environ me every where. His *Swearing* in that Manner, as it is in the Original, by the common Rejoicing of all the Apostles, and other Christians, by a sublime Turn of Thought, gives *Existence* and certain *Being* to their *Rejoicing*: But how, or where could their Rejoicing possibly exist, but only in their certain Knowledge of a *Living, Arisen Saviour*; and in the Confidence of ample Rewards from him, when he raises their injured Bodies from the Grave; which, in time, will, as assuredly be done, as he has raised his own: *ὁπότε τῶν νεκρῶν* seems to be put in the plural, rather than the singular, because the Hopes of the Resurrection of the Dead in Christ, is inseparably connected with, and folded up in that of our Saviour's. In this Way of understanding the Words, the Beauty, Strength, and Advantage of the Apostle's Argument is as conspicuous; as to suffer in the Flesh; and hope, and rejoice in the Spirit, for Christ being risen, and a Prospect of a recompensing Resurrection from him, is a stronger Evidence of any ones Believing in, and being assured of the Truth of both, than what can arise from any Disciples being *otherwise* baptized in his Name, or into his Death and Resurrection.

BAPTIZING was understood by the Jews in those Days, and consequently by the Apostles, who

who had first been *Moses's* Disciples, to be a synonymous Expression for *making Disciples*; the Baptism of *John**, preparatory to being Disciples to him who shou'd come after. The *Israelites* were baptized into *Moses*, i. e. became his Disciples after passing through the figurative Baptism of the Cloud and the Sea †. St. Paul thanks God, he baptized almost none ‡, much less any in his own Name, because that had been the same as making them Disciples to himself, and not to Christ. The baptized in whose Name were at first called *Disciples* before they bore the Name of *Christians*, which was not till the XLIII. Year of Christ.

In like manner, in a particular Case, to be a Disciple, or Professor of a Doctrine, is the same Thing (only more strongly express'd) as being baptized unto that Doctrine. Thus St. Paul, *Acts* xix. 3. puts the Question to those who had never heard the Doctrine, at least, not of the Receiving of the Holy Ghost, *Unto what then were ye baptized?* They answer, *Unto John's Baptism*, i. e. as it follows, the *Doctrine* of Repentance, saying, that they should believe on him that should come after, that is, *on Christ Jesus*. This Question plainly implies, that if they, *John's* Disciples, had been baptized in the common Christian Form, they must have known that there was a Holy Ghost. If therefore to baptize and make Disciples was so much the same, no wonder it is express'd by baptizing in the Name of the Lord Jesus, seeing Disciples to Him, rather than to the Father, or Holy Ghost, were

* *John* iv. 1. i. 25. † *1 Cor.* x. 2. ‡ *1 Cor.* i. 15.

CHAP. made of all Nations, by baptizing them in the
IV. Name of all Three.

As *Repentance and Remission of Sin* was to be preach'd among all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem*, the chief Confession qualifying for Baptism we find in the Case of the *Jayler of Philippi*, an *Heathen of Macedonia*, to be the believing on the Lord Jesus Christ†, of the *Eunuch* an *Heathen of Africa*, that *Jesus Christ is the Son of God*‡, and of *Cornelius of Casarea*, a *Jewish Proselyte*, we may presume from St. Peter's Sermon||, that he believed in his Heart the Lord Jesus, that God raised him from the dead, that he was Judge of quick and dead, Lord of all, that our Peace with God was by him, and that whoever believeth in him shall receive Remission of Sin.

THE falling down of the Holy Ghost, or receiving him in those Days, was for Signs and Wonders, sometimes, as in his Case, before Baptism; yet Water Baptism, to the Confutation of some who deny the Necessity of it, was expressly commanded for that very Reason, of having receiv'd the Holy Ghost, to follow after, as an instituted Means, and indispensable Divine Appointment, for entering into the Profession of Christianity. Sometimes not till after Baptism, especially after Prayers, and laying on of Hands of the Apostles (for confirming the Churches, or appointing proper Persons to the Ministry) who were extraordinarily qualified for it, being themselves previously baptiz'd with the Holy Ghost and with Fire, descending upon them

* Acts xxiv. 47.
† Acts viii. 37, 38.

‡ Acts xvi. 31, 33.
§ Acts x. 36, &c.

in

in cloven Tongues, as of Fire. It appears then that the chief Effect and Purpose of Baptizing in the Name of the Father, &c. both Jews and Gentiles, was putting on Christ*, in whom Jew and Greek are one new Man, *εἰς καινὸν ἄνθρωπον*, Eph. ii. 15. For confessing, calling upon his Name (reciprocal to his Name being first called upon them) than which there is none other under Heaven given unto Men, whereby they must be saved, or have their Sins remitted; doing all Things in his Name for Acceptance with God.

AND as there is a Summary or Abridgment of all Things in Heaven or Earth in Christ†, much more of all Things in Christianity; so the chief Knowledge of him is recapitulated, in being Son of God, and Son of Man, as the completest Mediator between both, dying for us, rising from the dead, sitting Intercessor at the right Hand of God, and coming to judge the World. God without a Mediator will, at the final Consummation, be all in all‡; which supposes him now to be all in all to us, in and through the Mediator, who is the Alpha and Omega of God's Dispensation towards Man.

BAPTISM in the Name of the Father, &c. being then chiefly (whatever other Belief there was as to the Trinity and Unity) for promoting Faith and Fidelity to the Lord Jesus the Mediator, for Remission of Sins, eternal Life, and making Disciples to him; in the Acts of the Apostles, some are, therefore, particularly said to be baptized in the Name of the Lord, or Lord Jesus,

* Gal. iii. 27.
† 1 Cor. xv. 28.

‡ Eph. ii. 10. ἀνακεφαλαιώσας.

at

CHAP.
IV.

at the same time they were most likely baptized according to the express and seemingly indispensable Commandment, *in the Name of the Father*, &c. Baptizing in the *Name of Jesus*, may not unfitly mean being baptiz'd in Virtue of his *Authority*, and according to his positive Commandment, *in the Name of the Father*, &c. Or a Part may be express'd for the Whole, as being for principal a Thing of that Rite.

FORASMUCH as initiating into the Name or Profession of *Jesus Christ*, that he is the Son of God, the Lamb dying, according to the Passage then read out of *Isaiab*, *Acts* viii. 32. or into *the Way*, or *that Way*, often mentioned in the *Acts* of worshipping and coming to God, through the *Lord Jesus* the Mediator, for the Remission of Sins, and all other Benefits of his Mediation, was the principal Thing in that Form of Baptism, and the chief View of the Commandment; this may serve to solve the Difficulty; why some are said to be baptized in the Name of the *Lord*, or *Lord Jesus*, at the same time the Command and the Form of Words stand peremptory, *in the Name of the Father*, &c.

THERE is mention, *Heb.* vi. 2. of the Doctrine of *Baptisms* in the plural Number, tho' we are assured elsewhere * there is but *one* Baptism: As written to the *Hebrews*, many of whom were baptized with *John's* Baptism, it probably means that of *John*, and that also in the common Christian Form; because this last was never repeated; but to the Baptism of *John* was afterwards added that in the Christian Form †; or, the Doc-

* *Eph.* iv. 5.† *Acts* viii. 16, 17. xix. 5.CHAP.
IV.

trine of *Suffering*, then a Fundamental of Christianity, may be implied in the Plurality of *Baptisms*, as above explain'd. That the *trine* Immersion was the Occasion of the Expression, there is no Grounds to believe, because so much later than that Time.

IF then there is any new and farther Obligation, in firmly resolving, covenanting, and steadfastly *undertaking* to perform what is antecedently our indispensibly Duty; if any Fidelity in being true to ones Profession and Engagement; any Force in a Promise, in a Promise before many Witnesses; any Sacredness in a Vow and Promise to God: All these concur in accumulating the solemn and sacred Obligation so wisely intended to be superinduced in Baptism. And if such solemn foederal Undertaking is an excellent moral Means for furthering good Manners; and if there is a notorious Reasonableness, Honour, and Morality in performing one's *Contract*, as all Books of *Civil Law* agree, especially when made in the Solemnity of a Rite, exhibiting an outward and visible Sign and Form, typifying, indicating, and foederally engaging, inward Purity and Holiness: We must acknowledge, there is great Reasonableness and Morality in the plain easy Rite of Baptism, as it is a *Divine Institution*; not arbitrary, but generally necessary; and therefore *positive*, because most useful for effecting the Religion of the End, and of the Means.

NAY, before it became an Institution of *Christianity*, it was called by our *Saviour* himself, a Branch of the Law of *Righteousness*, *Mat.* iii. 15. not because it was any where expressly commanded to the *Jews*, for that is no where to be found,

CHAP. but because it is a *right Means*, of a moral Tendency for better performing the great moral Law of everlasting Righteousness, obligatory upon all Men, the *Roman Soldiers*, as well as the *Jews*. And therefore our blessed Lord and Master, intending to adopt Baptism into his Religion, that he might be an *Example*, in using the most *solemn Means* and Method of *undertaking* to discharge the moral Law of perpetual Obligation, which he was about to preach up, and practise; over-ruled the *Baptist*, (at the same time he attested his Function, as his Fore-runner, and that his Baptism was from Heaven, and not from Men,) and was baptized with his Baptism of *Repentance*, which leads the Way to Righteousness and better Obedience. That we, who have indeed Sins to repent of, might more readily follow his Steps, as well as obey his Commandments, in embracing the Method he has instituted for entering into Covenant, and being a Member of his Church, where Remission of Sins, and all other Blessings of his Mediation, are particularly promised and insured.

AND as the Design of Baptism, or the Christian Calling to eternal Life, is *professing a good Profession before many Witnesses*, 1 Tim. vi. 12. So our Lord, before he enter'd upon his great Undertaking of saving the World, had many Witnesses at his Baptism. The Voice of the Father from Heaven, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*; the Holy Ghost lighting upon him, demonstrated him the *Lamb of God for taking away the Sins of the World*; as well as by many miraculous Works, wrought by the same Spirit, bearing witness afterwards, that he was *sent of God*, 1 Tim. iii. 16. Said to be *justified in*, or by

by the Spirit and the Water, or the Testimony given by St. John at his Baptism, *This is he who cometh after me, who was before me*. All these besides the *Blood*, bore Record to the same Truth, that Christ himself says he came to bear witness to, John xvii. 37. that he was the Son of God, the appointed King, Prince of Life, Saviour, Mediator in the mediatorial Kingdom of Reconciliation between God and Man.

It appears then in Conclusion, 1. That they, who reject Water Baptism altogether, are guilty not only of disobeying Revelation, but the Reason of Things, by neglecting a moral fitting Means of Righteousness, as well as contemning and superseding a *positive Institution* of Christ.

2. THAT Problem or Query*, *Whether there be any Necessity* (even upon the Principles of Mr. Wall's Hist. Infant Baptism) *for the continual Use of Baptism among the Posterity of baptized Christians?* may be easily solved. For, if Baptism has a moral Operation of very great Advantage to the baptized, as the Person *once* solemnly enters into the Christian, or second Covenant, it ought to be perpetual to all Generations, personally obliging every Individual, capable of Obligation; and yet it will not follow, that it ought therefore to be repeated on that Account; because a *solemn Entrance* into a Covenant, founded upon the Death of the Mediator of it, into which Death Baptism is the prescribed Initiation, ought to be but once†; especially since there are, as is ac-

* Mr. Emlyn's Tracts, who seems desirous to have it solv'd, pag. 456.

† The Abyssine Christians of Ethiopia have a very absurd Custom of repeating their Baptism every Year, upon the Feast of Epiphany. Varen. de diversis Religionibus, pag. 246.

knownledged

CHAP. IV. knowledgeable by the Querist, "other sufficient

" Ways to revive the Sense of our Duty to God, and of our religious Bonds," viz. by the other religious Duties of our Profession, and in particular by the *Lord's-Supper* *. It does not follow, by Parity of Reason, because the *Posterity* of Profelytes among the *Jews*, (whose Ancestors upon their becoming Profelytes having been baptiz'd, the whole Family, Children with their Parents) were counted *holy*, not needing afterwards any Initiation by Baptism, according to the current Maxim, *If the Root is holy, so are the Branches*; that therefore Christian Baptism was only intended for those who became Profelytes to Christianity from an *Infidel* State; and not for the Descendants from Christian Parents born in the Church. For there is this manifest Disparity in the Cases; the Privileges of the *Mosaic* Covenant were chiefly *temporal*, and consequently inheritable, and therefore Children were initiated at the same time with their profelyted Parents, that the *whole* Stock of the present Family being made holy, their Posterity might be holy, and inherit the Blessing they were incorporated into, so much at least, as Baptism without Circumcision admitted the *Profelyte of the Gate* into; for if they were Profelytes of *Justice*, Circumcision was added to Baptism; and though Baptism was omitted to their Off-spring and Descendants, Circumcision was not.

BUT the Privileges of the Christian Covenant, which God promis'd the *Jews* to make in the After-Days under their *Messiah*, were spiritual, as the Remission of Sins, &c. and consequently

* Page 449.

not

not inheritable at all; though young Children, before they knew the Difference between Good and Evil, inherited the *Name* holy, if either Parent was *Christian* *: If not inheritable, it follows, that the Posterity of baptized Christians ought to be likewise baptized. The ascertaining the *Remission of Sins* by washing and baptizing into the *Death* of Christ, and the *Adoption* of Children by Renewal of the Holy Ghost, and other Privileges of the new Covenant, and making the Conditions of it *personal* to every one's Engagement and Practice, is the Personal, permanent Use and Advantage of Baptism.

3. As to the Time of baptizing in *Infancy*, that is assisted and reliev'd by the due Use of its *Appendage*, *Confirmation*, which should rather be look'd upon, where Infant-Baptism wholly prevails, a finishing Part of Baptism, in order either to preserve the true Nature of Things, or recover the primitive Practice. Much Good may come of that *charitable Work*, as well as great Comfort to the Parents, in bringing little Children, to Baptism and to Christ, who are certainly capable of his *Blessing*; most undoubtedly a *Blessing* to them, when they are afterwards at the Years of Discretion and Choice, brought on to be perfected at Confirmation! At which Solemnity, all the Ends and Purposes of Baptism are recogniz'd, and become personally binding in Dis-

* 1 Cor. vii. 14. *Else were your Children unclean; but now are they holy.* In the Reasoning of Men, *conclusio semper sequitur deteriorem partem*: But it is otherwise in the Reasoning of God towards little Children; for if one of the Parents is Infidel, the other Christian, the Child is of the Family of those that are sanctified, is, as to its Root and Stock, of the Family of the *Saints*, or *holy*, the primitive Name of Christians.

charge

CHAP. charge of *Proxy's* Engagements. Guardians, such
IV. Nature has made Parents and other Assistants
call'd in at their Choice, are wisely allow'd by all
Laws to do every Thing tending to the certain
Benefit and *Advantage* of *Minors*; at the same
time what is transacted to their Prejudice, is
voidable by them at the Years of Discretion.
They promise and engage, not what the Infant
shall do, but what *he* shall be taught, call'd upon,
and reminded to do; what at the Years of Dis-
cretion the Person would be obliged to do, whe-
ther any Body had undertaken and promised for
him, or not. For that Obligation and En-
gagement, in its own Nature, becomes *Personal*,
as soon as the Youth becomes a *Person*, i.e. has
the Use of Reason to understand Religion.

4. It follows, that if any have ignorantly re-
ceiv'd the Lord's Supper before Baptism, they
ought nevertheless to be baptized.

5. It seems that the principal Sealing of the
new Covenant in either of the Sacraments, is by
the *Blood* of the Mediator only, slain, and seal'd
from the Foundation of the World, equally in
Trust, and devoted in Interest to both Parties,
God, and Man. God ratifies the Covenant, and
recognizes the Seal in his Oracles to Man. *The
Foundation or Covenant of God standeth sure,
having this Seal of mutual Consent between the Par-
ties: God knoweth, approveth in Blessings and
Privileges, who are his, in the calling to eternal
Life in Christ; and let every one that nameth the
Name of Christ, in that Calling, and enters into
that Covenant by Faith in the Mediator, depart
from all Iniquity. And Man, in his Sacramental
Promises to God, ratifies and recognizes it on his
Part,*

Part, by so endeavouring to undertake, and then CHAP.
confirm his sacramental, personal Purpose of IV.
fulfilling the Terms of it. The mutual Stipula-
tions of both Parties of the Covenant in the Me-
diator thereof, follows the sealing by his Blood,
and are the mutual Ratification and Confirmation
of it, to the World's End.





CHAP. V.

*Of the Lord's-Supper.*CHAP.
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THIS solemn Rite is positively instituted for *recognizing* Faith in the Mediator of the new Covenant, and other Engagements professed and undertaken at Baptism: Like the former, it has something Moral, something Positive: The positive or instituted Part being grounded upon select Reasons and Fittestes.

I. THE *Morality* of it, when closely considered, will be found to consist in the *Fitness* of *remembring*, and the *Reasonableness* of obeying the Command, and recognizing the *Kindness* of so signal a *Benefactor*; celebrating with Praise and Thanksgiving the Mercy of God, and the Love of our Redeemer to such undeserving Objects; but especially re-inforcing, and making good whatever Engagements we have laid upon ourselves, when we solemnly entered into the *new Covenant* by Baptism, and took the Calling of eternal Life upon us, and our Profession of being Disciples to such a Benefactor and Saviour.

ALL Mankind are agreed in the Duty and Morality of this, and have, upon Occasion put it into Practice: And they are no less agreed, that the Commemoration ought to be suitable to the

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the Benefaction. If it is what all are interested in, it ought to be publicly observed for that Reason, by all capable of joining in such a solemn Memorial. Was it of a worldly Nature, and bodily Advantage only, Demonstrations of bodily and worldly Joy had been sufficient Commemoration: But if of a rational spiritual Kind, importing the highest Comfort, and solemnly, by Symbols, expresseth the most important Truth in all the World, the Knowledge of the Peace of God (in his Method of remitting Sins) which passeth, *i. e.* surpasseth all other understanding and Knowledge, to every Heart and Soul that is sensible of the Burthen of Sin, and seeketh its Happiness in the Assurance of God's Favour, through the Ways and Means of better Obedience, which such a solemn Method of Assurance has put us upon; then every Body must acknowledge, that the Commemoration, like the Kindness, ought to be rational, spiritual, solemn, for Reasons drawn chiefly from another Life: And as frequently as is agreeable to the Mind of such a beneficent Friend; which is just as often as Prudence consulting the spiritual Advantage we may receive thereby, does dictate, where there is Convenience and Opportunity for it.

THE whole World, from the common dictate of Reason, has been in Possession of some public Gratitude and Remembrance towards their most known and eminent Benefactors, *without* any Appointment from them: Nay, to that Degree of after-Respect, for fear of falling short, and so early too as before the Flood*, that they

* See *Sanchoniatho's* Phœnician History, pag. 234. compared with pag. 244.

CHAP. V. deified them, though as much and as mere Creatures as themselves. By parity of Reason, where a Benefactor, the *Son of God*, is known to descend upon Earth, and, at the greatest of human Exigence, (an Interposition worthy of such a Condescension!) appeared in due Time in the Likeness of Men, and Form of a Servant, to minister to all Men, teaching the Way, the Truth, and the Life; giving an Example of all good living; patiently suffering for it; but most gloriously of all, dying a painful and shameful Death, for the Remission of the Sins of all Men, even of his Enemies, when they will become their own and his Friends; rose again from the Dead, that Life and Immortality might be brought to the Light of Mens Eyes; ascended into Heaven, not to desert, but be more divinely present with his People, their ever-living Patron for promoting all the Mercies and Favours they can want or desire, and Joy and Happiness more than they know how to desire. I say, where-ever these Things are known, and known in all the Certainty that can assure the World of the Truth, both of the Fact, and of the Favour of such a Benefit; does not an indispensable Obligation, even upon the Foot of moral Gratitude, press and importune us to commemorate such a good, great, and marvellous Benefactor?

If he has obliged us beyond Requital, that is so much the greater Reason for our lasting Acknowledgment. If he requires it peremptorily, and has appointed the Manner of it in general Directions, What is our Compliance in that Case, in common Reason, but common Gratitude? Is it not meet, and right to bring all the appointed Ends into the Memorial, in order to render our Participation

Participation more worthy of it? It is meet, right; and bounden Duty, that the Partakers, while they are partaking of the Sign of the signified Thing, which procured them so many Benefits, should rejoice with the greatest *Eucharist* and Ovations of Praise and Thanksgiving for what has been done for them. The reasonable and grateful Part within us, consents unto it, and readily subscribes to that Christian Part of our Profession. Thus far it appears, that this instituted Part of Christianity grows out of that Root of Morality, which is rooted in the Hearts of all Mankind. Forasmuch as our merciful and gracious Lord hath so done his marvellous Works, that *they ought to be had in Remembrance*, and the Work of Redemption above all other Works.

II. THERE is a *positive instituted* Part, which the Reason of Man even acquainted with so admirable, and so respected a Benefactor would not, uncommanded by competent Authority, have pitched upon of its mere self; and yet after the Appointment, cannot but acknowledge the Excellency and the Reasonableness thereof. And that in two Respects, 1. As the Remembrance is appointed to be celebrated in the Usage and Application of external Signs and Symbols: 2. In the particular ones of eating Bread and drinking Wine.

FIRST, that the Memorial of the precious Death of our Divine Friend should be preserved and repeated in the Use of any Signs, Reason of itself would not have suggested. For why might it not be brought to Mind, and piously reflected on by all Hearers; when it is read out of the sacred History where it is recorded? Why not

CHAP. V. by a Congregation of Thinkers meeting together, as we are told *some* do, at Times, in profound Silence, to look at one another, and think over the Affairs of Religion? But one that is wiser than either, even the Wisdom of God, who best knows whereof we are made, order'd Matters otherwise, and by his appointed Method, designed to attract and center the *whole* Man to the Transaction, most important to his Interest, his unspeakable Comfort, and his endless Benefit. In order to which, the Senses were not to be diverted at the Solemnity, but purposely fixed and engaged upon the Business likewise: He knew what we ourselves must confess by an old Observation, which is, and ever will be attested in Experience, as long as the World endures,

*Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures,
Quam quæ sunt Oculis subiecta fidelibus.* Hor.

That we are not naturally so strongly affected with what we hear, as what we *see*. It pleased him accordingly in that solemn Commemoration to con-note in particular the solemn Matter of Fact with solemn Action, and outward and *visible* Signs *evidently before the Eyes* of Christians, *setting forth Christ crucify'd*; that the profitable Remembrance might approach the better on all Sides, and make its Entrance the more effectually at all Avenues to the Mind: At the *Ears* hearing the sacred Institution and good Devotion belonging to the Business; at the *Feeling*, handling the *Symbols*, not the Body or Blood of Christ; at the *Mouth*, the Inlet of bodily Life and Sustenance; at the *Eyes* most especially, which still most fixes and captivates the Reflection of the inward Man. That he might, by all Means, impregnate our Souls full of the

the fruitful Consideration of the best Kindness, of CHAP. V. the heavenly Benedictions of our Lord and Saviour thus dying for us, and the innumerable Benefits receivable from his Blood-shedding, upon the faithful Performance of the Conditions on our Part.

“ IN all this the great Wisdom and Goodness of God is to be admired, in making this Kind and merciful Provision for his Church; who, considering our Frame, and how large a Share *Sense* has in our human Composition, was pleas'd in Condescension to our Infirmary, to address himself to us by that weaker Side of our Nature; and lest, in such a Crowd of sensible Objects as we daily converse with, we should (as we are too apt) be tempted to forget him; was pleased by those very *sensible* Objects to bring us to himself, by making Use of some of them as his Remembrancers, and as Steps whereby we might ascend to the Contemplation of the most spiritual and heavenly Mysteries.”

FOR any therefore, after our Saviour has taken such abundant Care, to institute external Signs of the greatest Signification, concerning the distinguishing Parts of Christianity, for edifying and building us up in his Religion, by an Ordinance for ever, till his second coming again in visible Appearance to all Men; to pretend to be so spiritually refined, as not to need such a carnal Ordinance to help them the more solemnly and effectually to remember the Death and Passion of Christ; and so quite lay aside this, as they do the other Sacrament of Water Baptism: What is it but to forget that they themselves live in the Flesh; And for so long must depend upon external

CHAP. V. ternal Means and Ordinances for the Promotion of Spiritual Things.

To be so unreasonable therefore as to drop one Half of the Reason of Things, with a Design to shew themselves but Half-Men in this Life, with respect to their particular *Self*, as if they were peculiarly exempted above all People from being *Whole-Men*, made up of Sense as well as Reason, of Flesh match'd with Spirit, is certainly a very irrational, unmanlike Spirituality, swelling or stretching itself beyond the present Measures of a Man. No Man, surely, in his present Station in the Body, ought to pretend to a *reasonable Service* of God, in Methods which exclude and put asunder what God, the supreme Reason, has joined together in this World, for Life. For that very Reason, and Respect to the Body, the Apostle beseeches the *Romans* xii. 1. *to present their Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, and acceptable to the Lord, which is our reasonable Service.* As long as God and Reason require the same Things, and Body and Soul live together in this State of Probation, publick Worship, where the Body attends as well as the Spirit, must be fed and kept up with some Externals of Religion for the better Edification of the Soul, and for that visible Communion in one Bread, and one Body, with all its Members, holding of one Head; for promoting a mutual Excitement to the Duty of mutual Love, and Care of one another.

WE may as well pretend to sustain the animal Life of the Body without Externals, as the Life which is hid invisibly in *Christ the Head*, without visible Memorials of him: Especially since the external Rites and Symbols are so simple, so few, and

and so suitable, as, instead of stifling, quickens that Life; in lieu of diverting, fixes the Attention of the Mind, and are so far from obscuring, that they help to realize the great Fundamental of his Religion, and therefore are not to be look'd upon as *indifferent* by any Christian, like the Externals of Man's ordering. Professedly therefore to supersede such a solemn Ordinance and external Help, what is it but to charge *Christ*, foolishly, for enjoining his Followers that Method of keeping up a perpetual Memorial of him, *till his coming again?* And as the Commands of our Lord are not arbitrary, but wisely adjusted to our Constitution of Body and Mind, and purposely calculated for the Promotion of our greatest Good; the omitting of it must needs be the pretermittting the divinest Means and Advantage for being good. The Lord's-Supper being purposely instituted to keep up the dear Remembrance of our Relation to the *Mediator* of the *New Covenant*, that, drinking the *Cup* thereof, we might *remember* our Engagements in that Covenant, in order to preserve and repair our frail Stedfastness in the same; to reject that Institution in Principle, and refuse that commanded Method of shewing forth the *Lord's Death*, till his coming again, is to reject their Relation to a *crucified Saviour*; *cast the Covenant behind them*, and disavow the Basis of the Hopes of Salvation, the *Death* of the Mediator. But to do it under a Pretence, that his coming again from the Place whither he was gone to make Preparation for his Followers, is already fulfill'd, by his being come (as they phrase it) *into their Hearts*, is not only to reject the Necessity of any solemn Remembrance of our Lord's Death, but, in Effect, rejecting his coming again to judge the World: for if he has

CHAP. V. has no other coming again but what they assign, they may as well, and by the same Conceit, allegorize the Resurrection as past already; which is to turn those Parts of Christianity into mere natural Religion, or *Deism*.

IF then external Signs and Symbols are so well fitted to the more solemn Occasion of commemorating the Death of Christ, and are so many visible repeated Memorials, both of our Christian Benefits receivable from the new Covenant in his Blood, and of our Christian Duties corresponding to it in the whole Tenor of our Lives; and if our Lord has expressly affixed those helpful Significations with a Design to edify us the more, as often as we reflect upon his Death and Passion in that most solemn Manner; it follows, that that Position, *viz.* "The spiritual eating of Christ is common to all Places, as well as the Lord's-Table*": If it means, that it may be done every where, and *without* the appointed Symbols used at the Lord's-Table, it must needs be a Mistake; because it is a dangerous opening the Way to the general Disregard of the appointed Symbols; and consequently a disuse, or superficial Use of the Lord's-Supper.

EVIDENT it is, that as oft as we reflect upon the then and there instituted End of Christ's Blood shed for the Remission of Sins, our Faith in Christ the Mediator of the new Covenant founded in his Blood-shedding, as a full, perfect, sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World, may be very opportunely enliven'd, strengthen'd, and confirm'd at that So-

* *Hales of Eaton*, Tract upon the Sacrament, pag. 57.
lemnity;

CHAP. V. lemnity; past Wickedness naturally making us otherwise diffident of the Forgiveness, and Access to God, there presented to Remembrance, and exhibited to our Faith. The Want of which Observation, seems to have occasion'd another Mistake in the same Author, who rejects the Notion of Faith in Christ being at all confirm'd there; affirming, that "the receiving it [the Lord's-Supper] is [only] a Sign of Faith confirm'd, and that Men come to it, to testify that they do believe, not procure that they may believe*." Where from what follows, he plainly means by *Faith in Christ* an Assent only to the Truth of Christianity; which indeed ought first to be supposed as confirm'd in that Sense in every approaching Communicant; but still, consequent to that, may he not at that Solemnity, feed and confirm the Reliance of his Mind upon the comfortable Doctrine of Remission of Sins, of full and free Acceptance with God, through his Blood? Which is a *Faith in Christ*, most *seasonable*, and *particularly* belonging to the Lord's-Supper. It may as well be said that our Love of Christ is not fed and improved by that Remembrance of his dear Love to us. Are not Christian Habits best maintain'd and strengthen'd by the due Repetition of *solemn, occasional, most Christian, most impressive and expressive* Acts?

2. THE *second* Thing positively instituted, is the Appointment of *Bread and Wine*, which the Lord commanded to be received, as the *only* Signs

* Page 54. The same Answer will solve that Query, *an semper communicandum per Symbola?* In Grotius's *Tract de eorum administratione*, &c.

and

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and Symbols for commemorating his Death and Passion. They seem to be enjoin'd in particular for these Reasons. *First*, Because had our Saviour given a general Command for the solemn Remembrance of his Death by some Sort of visible Signs or other, without mentioning any Particulars; his Disciples, in that Case, had been variously divided in chusing, some this Sort, some another, knowing no one particular External having necessary Connexion with such a Duty: A general Distraction would have ensued; little Union, and therefore no such Thing as *Communion* with fellow Christians. The generality, perhaps, would have had Recourse either to painting, graving, carving, or moulting some tragical Representation of such a Death; the Consequence of which had been, that the Image or Picture would have intercepted from the generality of gazing Communicants, and terminated upon its outward visible Self all that religious Regard, which belonged only to the Thing signify'd. And so the Death and Passion of Christ would, by Degrees, have been swallowed up of the *Sign*.

FOR the Prevention of such pernicious Superstition, and Confusion in a Matter of so much Importance, Bread and Wine (wherein there is no Similitude to the Thing intended, save only in the breaking one, and pouring out the other) were the Signs commanded on Purpose by our Lord, that it might never be mistaken for the Thing represented. It is evermore the Nature and Office of a Sign, signifying *ex instituto*, to be essentially and constantly different from the Thing signify'd, never to pass in Reality for, but ever be distinct from it. When a Word or Expression

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Expression is therefore in that Case designedly figurative, and symbolical, it can never, at the same Time, signify literally, but always figuratively; the Moral or Figurative, must be the true Sense, and not the Literal; the *moral* and *literal* are opposite in all such Instances of Language; the latter killeth, (as in the Church of *Rome*) the former giveth the Life, or Meaning.

IF the Sign signifying, and representing, is a visible Body present, then the Body and Blood of Christ signify'd and represented, cannot possibly be present likewise, but, of Necessity, must be *absent*; nor can it represent any thing but what is true of the absent Body, not its present offering up upon the Cross, but that it *was once* offered up. If the Body was indeed present, as some absurdly contend, what need of *commemorating* a Thing *present*? But if it is to be commemorated according to the Commandment of the Institutor, it must necessarily for that Reason be absent, to make a *Remembrance*. It signifies not as a *Type*, for that has Reference to something future; but as a Token and Pledge, both of its Absence, and of its being offered up once heretofore. And seeing it is the very Nature and Essence of a Sign or Symbol to be figurative and *representative*, not proper and literal; it must likewise be essential to the Words instituting, to mean *figuratively*, and by Way of *Representation only*. And if it is a Contradiction to, and Destruction of a Sign, to become the Thing signify'd and represented, behold! a new Contradiction in that Gulph, which swallows up all Sense and Reason in Religion, the *Romish Transubstantiation*.

Secondly,

DEISM DELINEATED.

Secondly, A N O T H E R Reason for selecting the Elements of Bread and Wine might be, because with the generality of Mankind, they are as common as Air and Water, *viz.* as much as is needful for that Purpose, is very procurable; that all Excuse as to Charge or Difficulty, or Unpalatableness, for abating the Remembrance that Way, might be for ever silent. Where Wine is not to be had, as is the Case of some Countries, the external Means are not for that Reason to be laid aside, but others substituted bearing the nearest Resemblance to Wine: In that Circumstance, Mercy is better than Sacrifice.

A N D if a farther Reason of appointing Bread and Wine may be drawn from their great and common Usefulness to the Nutriment of the bodily Life, one for strengthening, the other making glad the Heart of Man; the solemn Remembrance of the other, by an opposite and significant Analogy, is so understood to be the Food and Sustenance of our spiritual Joy and Life, *bid with Christ in God*, that its Peace and Comfort is as dependent upon the Memorial of that Method of God remitting Sins in Christ, as the Body upon Meat and Drink. Repentance, and Prayer, and Contemplation are Exercises of the Spirit of a Christian, but there is no living always upon Exercise, there must be, at proper intervals, *Nourishment* and *Sustenance* taken in, for the better Support of Exercise, Health, and Life; and what is that but the Bread that came down from Heaven, the *Death* of the Mediator, the Basis of all spiritual Life? The Stomach for it, is *Remembrance* or Reflexion of the Mind, in Society with other Christians, at solemn Times, and Places;
the

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the sweet Savour of it is Remission of Sins, very incident unto Man, and that most divine Taste of God's Favour and Reconciliation; the due Effects of it upon Earth, is growth in new goodness of Thoughts, Words, and Works; and the ripe Fruit of that, is Eternal Life. A Child is not more an Emblem of Humility, than the other Signs are of our *Need* of Christ crucified.

As in Baptism, supposing a State of Defilement at any Age, and it was, in Fact, customary with the *Jews*, to baptize whom they receiv'd into their Religion from a State of *Gentilism* or *Idolatry*, as a solemn, Intimation of *cleansing* them from the *Pollution* of Idols, and a publick Method for professing themselves *Profelytes*; nothing could be a properer external Sign and Form, with the Words, for initiating into a pure and holy Religion, and for renouncing what was otherwise: So, supposing a *Need* of feeding, strengthening, and refreshing our Minds, with the Recollection of what Christ has done for us, in the best Solemnity, which is that prescribed; What so proper external Sign could be devised, as Bread and Wine, which the Lord commanded to be received? Neither one nor t'other is a dumb, difficult Hieroglyphick, but a visible foodful, chearful Occasion for the Eye of Faith to behold, as in a Glass, the Food and Comfort of the Soul. As our Lord originally instituted it *after* Supper, that shew'd the *outward* Man had no need of it, but that the *inward* Man was thence obliged to take that Occasion, the better to think and eat of the Bread that came down from Heaven, for the Life of the World, as the most foodful, serious, cogitative Thing.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, A further Reason of these familiar and procurable Signs might be a Care *ex abundanti*, for preserving the principal Belief and Doctrine of Christianity in the World, viz. the DEATH OF CHRIST. For the Truth of a past Matter of Fact may be kept up from Generation to Generation, when some *solemn Rite* or *Solemnity* is instituted for perpetuating the Memory of it; and the Reason of the Solemnity is continually handed down by some *written* Tradition, with the Custom and Usages of the same, (in *Epitome* of the Record) to the latest Posterity. And thus suppose the worst that could possibly happen, all the Writings of the New Testament perish'd in many Nations, the Memory of this capital Truth of the Christian Religion, might not have been quite lost, but transmitted from Father to Son, from Age to Age, as an inviolable *Prescription* in the *solemn* or *sacramental* Use of those cheap Things, as long as the Sun or Moon endureth, and be better, and more generally transmitted, than by Medals, Pillars, or Inscriptions. The indicative prophetic Type or Prelude of this, the sacrificing the Life of a *Lamb* instituted by God after the Fall, as appears by the Practice of *Abel*, *Gen. iv.* importing the Will of his offended Majesty, *That without shedding of Blood there was no Remission of Sins*, was thus universally spread and perpetuated through the whole Race of Mankind, in all Parts of the known World; varied indeed and corrupted sufficiently in various Places, by *oral* Tradition, but still holding Resemblance to the primitive Pattern, (a Practice no otherwise accountable in the Consent of all the Race, but that they certainly re-

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ceiv'd that Tradition, as they did their Blood in their Veins, from one common Parent.) But that being the Shadow of the Sacrifice of Christ, where the Substance has enter'd, the Darkness, with the bloody Sacrifice, together with the Idolatry and Superstition superadded, vanishes like a Shadow; and there remaineth the *Memorial* of the only valuable Blood, or true Sacrifice, once offer'd, by Signs and Symbols, as a sacred Occasion to Reason, to reflect in due manner, and to right Purposes, upon the blessed Institutor, was to last to all Ages and Generations.

It was at the *Postcenium* usual with the Jews at the Conclusion of the *Passover*, when Bread and Wine were serv'd upon the Table, purposely for the Guests to take some of each, and take thence withal a religious Occasion to *bless* and *thank* God for those Creatures, as well as for their *Deliverance out of Egypt*: Then it was our Lord and Master took the Creatures of *Bread* and *Wine*, seiz'd upon the *commemorative* Usage and Custom, converts, and enjoins it (blessing God upon that new Occasion) to the Remembrance of *his dying*, and *his Blood shedding*; an infinitely greater Deliverance than the other. Thenceforward the SUBJECT both of *Remembering*, and *Blessing* was changed. Thenceforward succeeded in lieu of the Memory of the Redemption out of *Egypt*, a much greater Remembrance, even the universal Redemption of the World by Christ our Passover, the Lamb of God slain for us; and a much greater Thanksgiving took place of that for Bread and Wine; even for the Son of God giving himself to be the Bread of the World, *the true Bread that came down*

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CHAP. *down from Heaven*, giving Life eternal to the
V. World.

AFTER the Disposition of the external Signs upon the Table, next follows the appropriating them to the holy and solemn Use which Christ has commanded, usually called *Consecration*; not as if any Alteration passes upon the Elements; for what was Bread and Wine before, is the self same still, in its Nature and Constitution, though appropriated from common, to a spiritual Use. The Remainder lies upon every Communicant, to make it that religious and beneficial Sacrament, Eucharist, and Communion it ought to be. And every one may communicate with their Spirit, and with their Understanding also, by bringing the Thing signify'd to the present external Signs; which is done by a pious Remembrance, and Consideration of the Ends for which the receiving the Lord's Supper was ordained; briefly comprised by our Lord himself in that plainly obliging, and no less advantageous Command, *do this in Remembrance of me.*

SHOULD it be asked *how*, and *where* is the Body and Blood of Christ *present*, after the solemn appropriating a certain Quantity of the Elements to the Use of remembering? The Answer is, in the Receiver's *Thoughts* and *Remembrance*. How can a *Memorial* be any where else? And there it is, or may be, as *verily* and *indeed* taken and received in the faithful Remembrance, as such a past important Transaction concerning the absent Body and Blood of Christ crucify'd, can be in the Mind of him, or her, who is devoutly commemorating, that it was once offered up in Sacrifice; and for whom; and for what
End.

End. This plain Observation is abundantly sufficient to rectify the many Mistakes concerning that *Presence*; seeing it is neither *in*, nor *under*, nor *with* those Elements at all; nor does there any *real Presence*, excepting that of Bread and Wine, enter into the Bread and Wine, unless *Thought* and *Recollection* of Mind can be a real Presence. 'Tis true, the *Thoughts* or *Ideas* making up collectively the Memorial of Christ crucify'd, is present to the Mind, but that makes his absent Body no otherwise present, than to the Intents and Purposes of thinking and reflecting. If that can create a *real Presence* of any Sort, then may every other absent Body thought of by *Occasion* of something present, *appointed* to be the Sign, Memorial, or Occasion of thinking thereon, be as well present *in*, *under*, or *with* that Sign or Occasion of thinking; as the Body and Blood of Christ, the Thing signify'd, can be believed to be with the Bread and Wine, the Sign, or the Thing signifying in the Lord's Supper. To talk seriously of any other *real Presence*, (if that which is *mental* may be called so) or of a Body being present after the Manner of a Spirit, is to study to make that difficult and unintelligible, which Christ, and the Nature of Things, have made very plain: For not the Bread and Wine, but our Thoughts taking an Occasion from those appointed Signs and external Actions of breaking and pouring out, of eating and drinking, to reflect seriously and thankfully upon the Death of Christ, the new Covenant in his Blood for Remission of Sins, Access, and Acceptance with God, and eternal Life; and to comply in earnest with all the Conditions on our Part, for obtaining the Benefits and securing the Blessings; our Thoughts, I say, substitute the Notion of Presence,
M 2

CHAP. V. fence, which, being no more than *notional* and *mental*, is consequently oppsite to *real* Presence: Not the Bread and Wine as such, but the raised Remembrance and religious Thinking, is that which works upon the Mind, and renders the Lord's Supper the most religious and devout Solemnity to us.

EITHER such as may be called a SACRAMENT; as we usually take Occasion thence to recognize, on our Part, the *Fidelity* stipulated in the new Covenant, and amend the Obedience of our Lives, which was before devoted and engag'd in Baptism, solemnly offering up ourselves, Souls and Bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively Sacrifice unto God. Submitting ourselves wholly to his holy Will and Pleasure, and studying to serve him in true Holiness and Righteousness all the Days of our Life. And this agrees with the Account *Pliny* transmitted to *Trajan* the Emperor, of the Christians in his time; *That they were wont upon a stated Day, to meet together early in the Morning, and bind themselves by a Sacrament not to commit Theft, &c.*

OR an EUCHARIST; with respect to the *Thanksgiving* Part, consisting of solemn Oblation, of most humble and hearty Thanks to Almighty God our heavenly Father, who of his tender Mercy did give his only Son Jesus Christ, to suffer Death upon the Cross for our Redemption; of all Times, and above all Places, it is then, and there very meet, right, and our bounden Duty to give *Thanks*.

OR the COMMUNION of the Body and Blood of Christ, as *St. Paul* has assign'd the Uses,

CHAP. V. Uses, 1 *Cor. x. viz.* (1.) For maintaining Christian Charity in *giving, forgiving*, and general *interceding*, among Christians, who are mystically one in Body; and all Fellow-Members of that one Body, whereof Christ is Head. The Mind is then aptly impress'd with a corresponding Disposition and Sympathy of mental Membership and *Communion of Saints*, by the bodily Concurrence of Christian People communicating of the signified Body. Love to Enemies is particularly signified and stamp'd upon the Mind, by representing the most bounteous superlative Example of it, in that, while we were yet Enemies, he died for us. And what can better inspire the Communicant with universal Benevolence and Reconciliation, than his receiving the Pledges of the like Love of God, and of our Master and only Saviour, thus dying for all Men? (2.) For preserving Christians from the Idolatry of communicating in any Service to, or worship of any other Mediator, for Acceptance with God, but the *one Lord Christ*. To whom they must all inviolably adhere, as the sole Master and Mediator of the true Religion, and Worship of God.

AND if there is but that one Mediator and Advocate with God, who lives for ever, and for all Intents and Purposes, to make Intercession *himself* for us, and represent and plead the *once* offering of Himself for us; not only the Doctrine of *Saints* and *Angels* interceding, is absurd; but that Notion lately espoused by *some* Protestants, *viz.* of the *Priest* or Minister *representing* the Sacrifice of his Son to God, and *pleading* that Oblation with him for the Sins of the Congregation, must be erroneous likewise; because it is a plain *sharing with*, an encroaching upon Christ's

CHAP. V. Office at the right Hand of God. For how easily, upon Occasion, might this Doctrine in its Consequences, be reconciled to the Popish *renewing and repeating* that Sacrifice, which was once made? It seems therefore not so true, nor so proper an Expression of the Lord's-Supper to call it a *commemorative Sacrifice*, as some have used, or rather misused that Expression of the ancient Fathers; who would probably have omitted it, could they have foreseen the ill Construction Posterity have put upon their *devout Metaphors*.

BUT in our Church's Office, instead of offering the Body of Christ, *real, or mystical*, for a Propitiation to God, there is *only offer'd* to Him, by the officiating Minister and Congregation, first *Prayers and Supplications* for all Men, *Alms and Oblations* for the Poor, (perhaps the Bread and Wine before Consecration may be thought by some to be offer'd) *Prayers* over the Bread and Wine, and *Praise* commemorative of the full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, Satisfaction (*once offered*) for the Sins of the whole World. *Secondly*, Vows and Resolutions for holy Obedience, *ourselves, our Souls and Bodies to be a reasonable, holy, and lively Sacrifice*. Such Sacrifice of ourselves, in devout Memorial of his, most fitly *shows forth the Lord's Death till his coming again*, before God and Man; the new Covenant betwixt God and Man seal'd by the Blood of the Mediator, being then and there with great Truth commemorated, as too much neglected by us; and then and there with equal Necessity resolved to be better observ'd. But a *commemorative Sacrifice*, is a very different Idea, with some Moderns, from the Commemoration of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ.

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THE commanded Virtue of the instituted Sign is, to create an Opportunity, and impress a solemn Memorandum of what Christ would have in that manner remember'd; the Virtue and Office of a Receiver of that Sign, must therefore be to receive it according to the Institution; remembring that it is his Business and Devotion, upon that sacred Occasion, to join the Sign and the Thing signified together, and bring the End to the Participation, the Death of our Redeemer, and the Sacrifice of his precious Blood, his Body broken, and his Blood pour'd out, and make it *mentally* present upon the Table, in the View of our Mind, *looking upon him whom we have pierced*, in his most serious and pious Reflections upon the same; as ever he desires to communicate as Christ would have him, and make a Conscience of *doing it in Remembrance of him*.

As the Cup is called by the Institutor, my Blood of the *new Covenant*, that necessarily and particularly brings to Remembrance our Knowledge of *that* Covenant, with our Obligations to, Deviation from, and Privileges in observing as we ought, and the ill Consequences of contaminating it with Sin and Disobedience; to be guilty of that by wilful Apostacy, is *counting the Blood of the Covenant an unholy Thing*, and a tearing off the Seal, *viz. the Lord knoweth* or approveth *who are his*; but how know, how approve, but from and by the COUNTERPART, *every one that nameth the Name of Christ* (and it is hard to remember him without his Name) *let him depart from all Iniquity?*

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FOR the Thoughts of that Covenant immediately and unavoidably bring into solemn Recollection, the *Mediator* of it; which includes not only Lord and Master, but something more, viz. all the unspeakable Kindnesses design'd by his *Death*, to our Souls and Bodies. And as we ought more especially to muse and meditate, and be grateful for Kindnesses at this time of *Eucharist* and Thanksgiving, what can be greater in all the World, than his dying upon the Cross for the Salvation of both, the Remission of Sin, the Resurrection of the Body, and Life everlasting, &c.? And if we have any Conscience of that Covenant, enter'd into by Baptism, or any Value for the *Mediator* of it, or his dying Command, we must remember our Sins with a forsaking Hatred, since that was the grand Benefit to us ward, *to save his People from their Sins, and redeem us from all Iniquity, that we become zealous of good Works.* In order to which, it previously promotes an Enquiry, and enjoins an Examination, how much, and in what Particulars we have deviated from the holy Profession we undertook at Baptism; whether we are in the Faith; and in the due and becoming Course of Obedience, which inseparably belongs to it; and whether the Ends of Christ's Institution, are the Ends, and no other, that brings us to that holy Sacrament.

AND what ought, or should be, the Consequence of such a Remembrance to any People, but to abhor and forsake those Sins more and more, which God has so severely forbidden, yet at so great a Cost is ready to forgive! And in that holy Purpose of sincere Endeavour, spiritually

tually drink of that desirable Spring of Comfort to a guilty Conscience, the Remission of Sins, and the joyful Sense of Friendship with God, upon the Condition of future Obedience; sufficient to kindle a Flame of Love and Thanksgiving in every Breast. Then *the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for us* (as the external Sign is bodily taken and eaten) will be thoughtfully taken, and spiritually eaten in Remembrance of his dying for us, and fed on in our Heart by Faith with Thanksgiving; and, as the Body and Soul of the Just live by this Faith, will be preserved unto everlasting Life. Then will the Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Blood of the new Covenant, be drank in our Thoughts, when the Remembrance of the Ends and Conditions for which it was shed, is the Guest there: And thus will our Souls be strengthened and refresh'd by the Body and Blood of Christ, if we eat and drink as verily with our feeding imbibing Faith, as with our Mouth; and thro' the Mouth Faith will perceive the *Life giving Virtue* of this Sacrament mentioned by the Homily, *i. e.* thus duly partaken will be a Pledge of eternal Life.

THE Church of England Office calls the Bread and Wine *holy Mysteries*, in that scriptural Sense of Mystery, which imports a *Symbol**; and puts all the Good and *Effect* of those holy Mysteries into the Peoples own Power, notwithstanding the *Unworthiness* (if such a Thing should ever happen) of the officiating *Minister*†.

AND this way of measuring by the Ends, will help us to a true Judgment, what is St. Paul's

* Eph. v. 32. † See xxvi. Article of the same Church.

unworthy

CHAP. unwor^{ly} receiving the Lord's-Supper, and what
 V. on the contrary is worthy receiving: For this is
 judging by the same Standard and Measure the
 Apostle himself appeal'd to. In order to shame
 and convince the *Corinthians* of their unworthy
 receiving it through the Disorders crept in among
 them, he recalls them to the original Institution,
 and to the Ends set forth by Christ, as he receiv'd
 them from him, and recites particularly *; then
 immediately forms his Argument, and subjoins,
*wherefore whosoever shall eat this Bread or drink
 this Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of
 the Body and Blood of our Lord*; i. e. whoever in
 partaking that Supper, omits the Ends which
 Christ himself has annex'd thereto, as did some
 of the *Corinthians*, that Person is to be accounted
 an unworthy Guest at that Supper, being guilty
 of a gross Misapplication concerning the Body
 and Blood of Christ, externally represented there
 by the Signs of Bread and Wine. For not to re-
 member those Ends, or not devoutly to reflect
 upon the Death and Passion of Christ, and not
 to represent to ourselves and to one another, the
 Love of God in that Sacrament, was not to eat
 the Lord's-Supper but prophane it; and to be as
 incogitant of what they were about, as if they
 were at their *own ordinary* Supper; not discern-
 ing the Lord's Body, or not discriminating the
 Bread and Wine, which were the Signs, from
 other Bread and Wine, which is common Vic-
 tuals.

He that comes to that Supper knowing the
 Bread and Wine to be purposely set apart for
 commemorating the Death of Christ, yet eats and

* 1 Cor. xi. 17, &c.

drinks

drinks those Symbols of Remembrance, without CHAP.
 applying them to the Ends of Remembrance, he V.
 eats and drinks nothing but *mere* Bread and
 Wine, he unseasonably eats, and unthinkingly
 drinks no Symbols, he discerns not the Lord's
 Body; he is therefore guilty of not considering
 the Thing signified, the Body and Blood of Christ.
 And consequently, seeing those Symbols (as he
 very well knew) were *purposely* to be eaten and
 drank, for considering and discerning the Lord's
 Body, he eats and drinks his own Condemnation,
 i. e. that which serves to reproach and condemn
 him, as well as expose him to the Provocation
 and Judgment of the Lord of that Supper, for
 not using such Symbols, at such a time, answer-
 ably to his positive Appointment and Memorial
 of himself: And for want of *judging* and *exam-
 ining* himself, and his Intentions of communicating,
 by the End, i. e. the *discerning*, discriminating,
 and *remembering the Lord's Body broken, and Blood
 of the new Covenant shed*, the notorious Design of
 that Supper; for which horrid Prostitution of the
 Knowledge and Conscience of what the Apostle
 had before deliver'd to them, at so sacred a So-
 lemnity; and for intemperate Disorders; and
 parting of Tables, and dividing Communion even
 under the same Roof, and for their unchristian
 Partiality and unseasonable Kind of Excommuni-
 cation of their Poor Brethren (the most absurd
 Behaviour certainly at the united Commemora-
 tion of a Saviour dying for the Salvation of all
 Men, Poor as well as Rich;) The Lord of that
 undiscern'd Body, and abused Supper, judg'd or
 punish'd the Irreverence of some with bodily
 Affliction, that others might be chasten'd into
 Amendment; some with Death: *For this Cause
 many are sick and weakly among you, and many
 sleep.* AND

AND as this gives a true Judgment concerning *unworthy* receiving, so does it of the Apostle's short, effectual Rule of *examining ourselves* previously, in order to prevent it in every Communicant ever after, (seeing we are free from the open Disorders and Indecencies among the *Corinthians*) which is again according to his Appeal in the Matter, *viz.* to make the *End* of the Institution fixed by *Christ* himself, the perpetual Standard for weighing and examining all our Comportment, and Purposes in Reference to that Duty. Whether we resolve then to be devoutly mindful and observant of what the Lord of that Supper lays a double Charge on us, at that Time, to mind and bear in particular Remembrance; to lift up our Hearts, to lift them up to that Lord who taketh away the Sins of the World, in the most grateful Remembrance, constraining and producing all Obedience, for his inestimable Kindnesses; and whether we will reform our Lives, conform our Minds and Actions to the Terms of the new Covenant in his Blood; and regulate our Hopes of Remission of past Sins; of readier Acceptance and joyful Access unto God; of eternal Life; and of all other Benefits of his Passion, by that solemn *shewing forth the Lord's Death*: That Kind of Remembrance being the perpetual Standard and Regulation for preventing *Schisms* and *Heresies* in reference to this Solemnity. But, as the *Apostle* observes in the same *Chap.* *They must needs be*, as long as there are Passions and Corruptions in Men, and the Providence of God permits them to have their corrupt Effects; the providential Touchstone and Event of it will or ought to be, that *they who are approved of the Lord*, by adhering to the

Ends

Ends of his own Institution, and preserving that *Sort* of Remembrance, *may be made manifest*, by that Discrimination, and that invariable Rule of right receiving according to *Christ's own Institution*.

WAS there a *physical* Virtue, or *inseparable* inward and spiritual Grace communicated to the consecrated Elements for imparting to Communicants the blessed Effects of the Sacrifice of *Christ*; or, which is the same Thing, could the *opus operatum* of corporeal eating and drinking*, answer the *End* of remembering his Death; Children, Idiots, or the most profligate Sinners, (intending still to be such) who never think at all of the Matter, would be worthy Receivers, and there could be no such Thing as unworthy receiving. But since they operate *interpretatively*, to our most serious Reflexion, as foodful Signs and Monuments, for raising our Thoughts to, and recollecting them upon the Thing signified, *Christ dying for our Sins*, and the great Love of God in that Dispensation of a *Mediator*: Seeing the Lord's Supper works upon the inward thinking Man in this *rational, moral* Way, (upon which may be expected the fulfilling of Grace and spiritual Benediction, in virtue of *Prayers* for the Gifts of the Spirit, at that Time, used; Prayer in *Christ's Name*, being the Key of Heaven for that Conveyance and Supply of our

* The *Papists* maintain'd that Grace was *ipso facto* conferr'd with the outward Symbols, and the People *justified* merely by the *Work* of receiving those Externals, by complying with those *sacramental* Works: The *Protestants* asserted on the contrary, That the spiritual Efficacy depended chiefly on the internal Part, the Application of the Mind by *Faith*. Thence commenced the Controversy between *them*, whether *Justification* was by *Works* or *Faith*; which receiv'd different Turns afterwards.

CHAP. V. Needs engag'd at our Entrance into the new Covenant, at Baptism) to the perfecting Holiness in the Fear of the Lord, as the Communicant in a lively Faith in God's Mercy, and being in perfect Charity with all Men, reflects upon *that Method* of God's pardoning Sin; as it is in itself, the greatest and most affecting Argument of his Love in Christ, that can possibly be laid before the Mind of Man, at a solemn time of reflecting, for winning his reciprocal Love, and securing his bounden Obedience.

THUS one Sacrament is the solemn Rite of initiating into the *new Covenant* with all its Privileges, Conditions, and Obligations; the other for solemnly and frequently *recognizing* and *remembering* it, in the Grounds thereof, the *Death* of the Mediator; and as both these Institutions and Solemnities, are adapted to operate in us symbolically and affectingly, thoughtfully and morally, the Design of the Gospel, *i. e.* sober, righteous, and godly Living, the Religion of the End, and the natural Religion of the Means, Repentance and Prayer. And if the Grace of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, appears unto all Men, to act thus spiritually, and yet most certainly in the moral Tendency of the two Sacraments; by solemnly first entering, and afterwards as often as the Obligation loosens, by riveting and refixing the Gospel, or new Covenant upon Christians, call'd the Ministration of the *Spirit*, and the Law of the Spirit of Life, for giving Life and Efficacy to the otherwise expiring natural Religion both of the End; and of the Means: How useful, excellent, and wise is the Institution of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper? How generally necessary to Salvation? How absurd the Neglect and Contempt of Scoffers? CHAP.



CHAP. VI.

The great Benefit and Service of Baptism, and the Lord's-Supper, in carrying on the MEANS, and END of natural Religion; in Answer to the shameful Misrepresentations of the Deists.

IN the two preceding Chapters, I have CHAP. VI. mentioned several godly Uses and Advantages arising out of the Institution and Design of these *positive* Parts of Christianity, as morally subservient for undertaking, and compleating our religious Engagements, sufficient to recommend them to the Practice of all, who would fulfil all Righteousness. Did nothing appear but the bare positive Command, and nothing in the Command but what is worthy of God, that is sufficient Argument for Obedience; inasmuch as Disobedience must necessarily be a moral Transgression of the Duty and Relation we stand in to God; but being sure of the Command, we may be all sure, there are abundant good Reasons for our Compliance, though we could not deduce them all.

A positive Command from Heaven to a particular Person may very well be designed, as a Trial, to distinguish him eminently from the rest of the Community. But when a *positive* Injunction

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IN the two preceding Chapters, I have CHAP. VI. mentioned several godly Uses and Advantages arising out of the Institution and Design of these *positive* Parts of Christianity, as morally subservient for undertaking, and completing our religious Engagements, sufficient to recommend them to the Practice of all, who would fulfil all Righteousness. Did nothing appear but the bare positive Command, and nothing in the Command but what is worthy of God, that is sufficient Argument for Obedience; inasmuch as Disobedience must necessarily be a moral Transgression of the Duty and Relation we stand in to God; but being sure of the Command, we may be all sure, there are abundant good Reasons for our Compliance, though we could not deduce them all.

A positive Command from Heaven to a *particular* Person may very well be designed, as a Trial, to distinguish him eminently from the rest of the Community. But when a *positive* Injunction

CHAP. VI. tion is laid upon the *whole* Community, and all are obliged to Obedience, that End can't be proposed. Therefore, as I observed before from *Puffend.* (a Book cited by our Author, and his Profession obliged him to be well versed in it) though a positive Law flows from the sole Pleasure of the Lawgiver, yet *these Laws ought likewise to have their Reason, and their Uses; in Reference to that particular Society for which they were enacted.*

WOULD it not therefore, better have become our Author, and every other Deist, to have enquired into the Reason, and Uses of such plain peremptory Commands, than to have slighted, traduced, and condemn'd them in the gross, and in such abusive Characters as they endeavour to expose them under? Is there not the greatest Reason, are there not the best of Uses in these two external Ordinances? If it is plain that the Christian Religion, with all its Comforts, is best begun and entered upon by *personal Covenant*, or Stipulation for that Covenant afterwards; nothing can be plainer, than that it must be carry'd on by the same Methods by which it began, *i. e.* a solemn Recollection and Remembrance of that Covenant, and the Mediator of it, in the Lord's Supper, as Occasion requires. What Ground is there for Exception? If, as they are set forth in Scripture, our Lord purposely instituted them, as being positively serviceable for attaching us the more firmly to himself, as *Mediator* of that Covenant, and so become the most potent Means for promoting Christian Holiness, or moral Righteousness: The learned Dr. *Waterland* has observed very rightly, "That many of the Scripture-Duties, which we have otherwise no Know-

ledge

CHAP. VI. ledge of, are yet justly referr'd to the Law of Nature; since Scripture hath discover'd what Foundation they have in the Nature and Truth of Things*." Though these positive Institutions of our Lord have the Supercription of his Authority, who commanded them; yet they were not commanded for commanding sake, but for the Use and Benefit of solemnly undertaking and improving in the natural Religion of the End, and of the Means, through the due Use of those divine Ordinances.

THEY were not ordain'd merely for their own sake; but in order to an End, to make us more effectually religious, by applying to new and more powerful Methods for invigorating, and perfecting the *natural* Means, for carrying on the Ends of natural Religion, by a moral Operation of our own perceiving; provided we are not wanting, in applying our moral Powers, which, in that Case, by Virtue of our own wise *choosing* such an Engagement, and with that, all the appertaining Assistances, makes that Yoke easy, that would otherwise be a Burthen under a previous Obligation of *another's* imposing. Though the Duties we engage in, don't arise merely from the Vows and Promises of keeping Covenant; but were obligatory before: Still to make them more so, we wisely and voluntarily become a *Party* in them, bind them with a two-fold Cord of Conscience, double their Force with Discretion, and with the Applause of our own Reason, superadd new Reasons for the better Performance of that, whereon our everlasting Happiness is

* *Nature, Obligation and Efficacy of the Christian Sacrament,* page 9.

CHAP. VI. dependant. Was the Performance before Engagement unlawful, the superadded Engagement could not make it valid, or denominate it Duty; but being previously obligatory, it becomes afterwards double Duty, attended in its Consequence with unspeakably more than double Happiness hereafter.

WHOEVER therefore is truly devoted to the End, will of Course be so to the best Means for obtaining it. How particularly expedient are they for furthering *Repentance* and *Prayer*, the two natural Means, which, as I shewed before under those Heads, were decay'd and dormant, languish'd and dispirited, for carrying on the Ends of the Religion of Nature? Remission of Sins, and Assurance of the Acceptableness of our Addresses to God in the Method laid before us in the Revelation of his Son *Jesus Christ*, which bring Comfort and Consolation to Repentance, and Wings to our Prayers; are represented not only in Words, but in sensible *Signs* and *Symbols* more significative and stronger than Words; that the *whole* Man might be captivated and taken in more effectually and *entirely*, for acquitting himself towards the Things signified, his own greatest Advantage. The Objection of our Author * against Symbols in Religion, viz. because they are apt to affect the generality more powerfully than Words, is the very Reason of the Divine Appointment in this important Case, especially since they are very few and simple, and so effectually guarded from Superstition, and Mistake.

IN *Baptism*, the sprinkling or cleansing the Flesh by Water (and Water is a Symbol of Pu-

* Page 152.

rification

CHAP. VI. rification among all Nations, with Christians, that they are to receive and put on Christ *pure*) is a *Tally*, to which the cleansing of the Spirit or Conscience from Sin by the Blood of Christ, and renewal of the Holy Ghost, answers; as dying to Sin, and rising to newness of Life, to our Burial and Resurrection with him, in Baptism; which enters us with a joyful Prospect into the meliorating cleansing State of Repentance; and, in the Adoption of Sons, introduces our after-Prayers to the Throne of Grace of our Almighty, and most merciful *Father*: Being exhorted to draw near to him in our Devotions with a true Heart, in full Assurance of Faith, having our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and our Bodies washed with pure Water. In the primitive Church, none were suffered to use the Prayer OUR FATHER, &c. before they were baptized, i. e. adopted by the new Covenant: So that Baptism might be called the Sacrament of Prayer, as it often was the Sacrament of Repentance, and the Sacrament of Faith. The saving Part of Baptism, according to the Apostle, is the Answer or Stipulation of a good Conscience towards God, performing its superinduc'd Covenant and Engagement contracted in Christ the Mediator of that new and better Covenant, by keeping that Baptism pure and undefiled, the remaining Part of Life; in Token of which new, covenanted, pure State, the Ancients invested the baptized with white Garments, for some Time after it. Socrates * argues a strict Obedience to the Laws, from a tacit Promise, Treaty, and Covenant, every Subject is supposed to have enter'd into in Virtue of the Protection and Benefit he receives from the Laws.

* See Plato's Crito, or, what we ought to do.

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How

CHAP. VI. How much stronger is such an Argument, when it is corroborated upon all Christians towards their heavenly Governor, by *express* Vow and Promise, *open* Covenant and Engagement?

EVERY one who puts on Christ, or takes Christianity upon them; especially at Confirmation, has a *new* Character, or, what the Civil Law calls a *Person*, confer'd upon them: Hence the Expression of being *born again*. Now it is most certain, that the Reflection of being in a *new* Station or Office has a very great Influence upon the Mind of Man to act and behave as becomes that Station and Vocation, more especially when it carries any particular dignity of Carriage with it. For which Reason, being now placed in a new Point of Sight, and beholding himself in the Light of a new Expectation of the World from him, though he behaved but indifferently before, he will *now* take care to acquit himself well, in Virtue of the Shame and Dishonour in derogating from the Post and Calling we have accepted and chosen, to take upon ourselves. And this also serves in the Nature of such a new Thing, to convince him that in the Race of Virtue, he can do a great deal more than he thought he could:

— *Possunt, quia posse videntur.* Virg.

And giving due heed afterwards to refresh and strengthen their frail Adherence to their sacred Engagements for better living, by most solemn Resolutions at the *Lord's-Table*, our natural Instability positively puts on by degrees, a *rational Stability* *. So the Lord's-Supper duly partaken,

* Which Polybius upon another Occasion elegantly styles, *λογισμὸς ἐξ ὧς οὐκ ἔστιν ἀλλὰ πειστικὸν τὸ πειστικόν.*

solemnly

solemnly restores those that are Penitent, and re- admits and re-instates intimidated Prayers, and gains ground over Infirmities.

BESIDES, an Engagement or Relation of our own contracting from *Choice*, or Liking, or Sense of Gratitude, has an Influence, Alacrity, and Endearment in it superior to a natural Relation, that we have no Hand in; as the Love of a Friend is dearer, more forcible than that of a Brother: And because Friendship must be mutual to make it lasting, and some Commerce of Secrets must pass, *Jesus* condescends to call Friend first; to communicate the most concerning Secrets, and lay down his Life for his Friend, for every one of us: Provided we do whatsoever he commands us; and one of his Commandments is, Ye believe in God, *believe also in me*. There are many Things for refreshing Belief in God; whilst the two *Sacraments* are appointed for engrafting, and recognizing Belief in *Christ* the Mediator.

REPENTANCE and Prayer are Duties of a daily Revolution; but because both Repentance, and Prayer, and Resolution of Obedience will often stand in need of *Repair*, by Reason of the Frailty of our Nature lapsing into former Sins, and whenever the Return is to bad, the Propension is to worse, till *better* Repentance, Prayer, and Resolution get the perfect Mastery of our Sins; the *Lord's-Supper* is ordained for solemnly strengthening, and fortifying their several renew'd Efforts for a good Life. To live afterwards with all the Fidelity due to our renew'd Vows and Promises, and with that Faith and Attachment to our *Lord* and *Master*, wherein we recognize ourselves engaged to follow him; by

recollecting in a more solemn Manner than usual, and impressing the Mind the more deeply with the condition'd Promises and Privileges, indispensable Obligations and Engagements embrac'd and undertaken in our Covenant at Baptism; and so apply'd, makes that a *Sacrament*, as well as Baptism: And religiously take and consecrate the Occasion, which was purposely given by the Author of our Religion, from that impressive Memorial of the *Blood of the new Covenant*, in drinking the Cup; to amend all our Deviations, and become more stedfast in that Covenant, cleaving to the Lord, *Mediator* of it, as the Patron of our Hopes, and the Pattern of our Obedience; sacrificing our Lusts, and crucifying all irregular Affections in particular; at that solemn Memorial of his Crucifixion, the Remembrance of our Sins should be grievous, the Burthen of them intolerable. How canst thou endure the Thoughts, O Christian, of taking that Covenant within thy Mouth, seeing thou hatest to be reformed, and has cast the Words of thy Lord and Master behind thee? But as thou takest that Covenant within thy Mouth, remember it as a Covenant, and forget not who is the Lord and Mediator, and for what End he became so; and how thou art by thy own Act and Deed obliged to be reform'd, to Mind his Words, and follow his Footsteps. For one part of the everlasting Covenant, or Gospel is, that *all Christians are predestinated to be conformed to the Image of Christ*, Rom. viii. 29. How incumbent therefore should they be upon the Imitation of him? How resolutely disposed to be like him both in his active, and passive Virtue? And in order to that, how ready to embrace and improve all Solemnities for copying, imbibing, and digesting his Example?

BREAKING

BREAKING the Bread, and pouring out the Wine, eating and drinking in Remembrance of our Redeemer, does not confer absolute Pardon of Sin upon the worthy Receiver, but recognizes the *Manner*, and re-inforces the *Condition* of final Pardon, exhibits our Life spared, and his offer'd up a Propitiation for our Sins: And thus shewing forth the Death of the Mediator as the *Means* of our Redemption, in the Consideration what we are redeemed from, and to what; and by whom; must improve the moral Virtue of *Gratitude* in us; *Qui meminit sine impendio gratus est*. Sen. Who can then and there be so ungrateful as not to remember him; who, besides past Kindness, forgets not to pity our Infirmities, to intercede with our heavenly Father for our Offences, and crown our Repentance and Prayer with desired Success? Who is then actually making us, that Part of us, our Faith and Trust, doing that in Remembrance of him, in Obedience to his Commandment, Partakers of his Intercession and all the blessed Fruits of it. Who can keep back his Reason, who can forbid his Senses then *tasting* and *seeing* how gracious the Lord is, and there receiving outward Pledges of spiritual, celestial, and eternal Gifts, from remembering, from being devoted, from being faithful to such a Lord? Or from reflecting, and comforting himself, how blessed is the Man, who thus trusteth in, taking the *Cup of Salvation*, and calling upon the Name of the Lord? Who thus calling, is the more intent upon serving him, by calling up the soft Force of irresistible Obligations to him.

SUCH Goodness of God to us must not only lead us to Repentance, but lead Repentance on to all

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the

CHAP. VI. the Fruits worthy of it ; the Redemption of the Sinner, and the Remission of Sins being so plainly ascertain'd before us. And in remembering his Death, we remember also his Resurrection and Ascension, and his sitting at the Right-Hand of God, the Mediator of Intercession, as well as Redemption for us, the ever-living, all-potent Advocate for clearing our drooping Prayers, and seconding and succeeding our Requests. Thus we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us, *i. e.* there is a constant renewable Communication, this Way, between God and us ; through him the *Mediator* and Center of perfect Friendship and Reconciliation, so far as to be an Habitation of God through the Spirit.

CERTAIN it is in the Nature of Things, that our Lord's Method in first instituting outward and visible Signs for commemorating his Death, and all the Benefits of his Passion, and then *positively commanding* our Application to them for that Purpose, affords a double Occasion both to the Senses, and to the Understanding (the Understanding of our compound Constitution being made to receive the most lively and affecting Ideas from the Senses) of pausing seriously, and pondering devoutly, what should be the Import of that Commandment ! who gave it, with Respect to the Dignity of his Person, and the Obligation laid upon us ! for what End and Purpose ! and approach it as a solemn awful Opportunity of reflecting, and feeding in the Heart, by Faith, with Thanksgiving. And such a *Thanksgiving*, at such a Time, is the most efficacious Prayer to God for every Thing we want ; *efficacissimum genus est rogandi, gratias agere, Plin. Pan.* Such a Thanksgiving certainly is not only seasonable ;

seasonable, and without Reproof, but impregnated with all Blessings. CHAP. VI.

AND is not that *prepared Season* of unspeakably more Use and Benefit to his Followers, than any loose, undetermin'd Opportunity of their own chusing ? who, for want of such an Appointment from *Christ* himself, in the particular Externals of his own chusing, would have been left in so many different Minds, and a general Disregard of any solemn Method for such an important Memorial ; and, what through the Multiplicity of worldly Affairs, the Tumults of Passion, the Indolence of most to serious thinking, and the Backwardness of all in considering spiritual Things, would hardly ever otherwise be brought to comport themselves with proper Seriousness and Heavenly-mindedness to the Divine Mercy, and the salutary Things signified thereby.

CAN any Thing be more natural, more exactly consonant to the Nature of *Love*, that all-prevailing and constraining Passion, than upon occasion of the dearest Friend in the World taking his Leave, and departing into a far Country, to say take this *Token*, this *Pledge* from *ME*, *Eat ; Drink ?* For all that the Person who *loves* can do is, to desire of the Object that he loves, not to be *forgotten* by Him. Thus the mutual loving and beloved Objects *live* and *dwell* in each other, though corporally absent from one another. But if God himself in whom is no shadow of Forgetfulness or Change, upon every Shower takes occasion, *Gen. ix. 16.* from *looking on the Rainbow*, the Token and Pledge of his saving Covenant from Water, to *Remember* it to our

CHAP. VI. our safety; what frequent Need has Man, who is as unsteady as Water, of *positive Tokens, appointed Symbols, federal Pledges*, of the everlasting Covenant of forgiving Sins in the Mediator, to Remember that Anchor of his Hope, and what must be the corresponding Steerage of his fluctuating Condition?

How contrary therefore to Truth, and to the Nature of things, and to common Decency, does our Author in the Airs of Triumph declaim against these Positives, as they are commonly called, of Christianity *? For he discards, and arraigns them in the Lump, with abundance of opprobrious Names, without ever assigning one single Reason or Argument against them in particular: Which is so much the more disingenuous and unfair in a *Champion-Writer*, because he knew *these*, with Faith in a Mediator, were commanded in particular; whereas other Rituals and External of Divine Service, wherein he indiscriminately and injudiciously includes the other three, are commanded only in general. But by taking that Method, he thought he could not fail of his Aim, that his Readers would not miss of applying and

* All other *positive* Laws, Divine or Human, (the Law of the *Passover* excepted, and other such-like commemorations, i.e. Laws) have Respect not to what is past, but to set Bounds, and make Provision against the future: But these are of that *peculiar* Nature, as to have Regard to what is *past*, as well as what is *future*; and after Publication, so far partake of a natural Law, as to be founded in Gratitude for past Mercies, in order to reclaim from a bad Conversation. They animate Repentance and Prayer; which jointly and severally respect what is past, as well as what is to come; to give us the Knowledge of ourselves, what manner of Persons we should not have been, as well as what we ought to be.

pointing

pointing in particular, the Virulence of his general Satire against those particular Objects of his Displeasure. CHAP. VI.

FAITH in a Mediator will be considered in its proper Place. I am now concerned for the other two. He hints at Baptism once *, and makes it as ridiculous, and absurd a Ceremony, as *paring of Nails*. He hints likewise at the other; "Supposing, says he, such symbolical Representations might be occasionally used, (meaning those of the Lord's Supper, from the Words preceding) is it not incumbent upon the Parties concerned to appoint, alter, and vary them as Occasion requires †?" If he means only altering and varying from the superstitious and idolatrous Corruptions introduced by the Church of Rome, he has the Concurrence of all Protestants: But if he intends Alterations and Variations from the original Rule, it can't be granted. He had said before ‡, "That in all Matters of a mutable Nature (and he supposes all *Peculiar*s of Revelation to be such, in Contradistinction to moral Things) which can only be consider'd as Means, he [God] obliges Men to act according as they judge most proper for bringing about those [moral] Ends": But, I hope, not to leave them at liberty to use them, or not use them; to alter, and vary them at Pleasure.

He often involves them in the Censure of his *indifferent* Things; from which he would have the Needlessness of them inferred. But though the external Signs were indifferent before; I

* Page 111, 112.

† Page 153.

‡ Page 91.

hope,

CHAP. VI. hope, the interposing Command of our Lord is sufficient to deprive Men of their Liberty, as to the *Indifference* of using, or not using them afterwards. He says *, "All Legislators punish the Breach of the Religion of Nature, being for the good of Society; whereas no Man rejects any *positive* Institution himself, but is willing that all others should do so to." This is talking and distinguishing like the most ignorant *Civilian* that ever deviated out of his Profession. For almost every *Civil Law* Book might have instructed him better, that the Number of *positive* Laws (infinite to reckon up) have arose, and continually will arise, either by Alteration of old; or Substitution of new ones, out of two Causes, which perpetually mix with human Society: 1. The Necessity of regulating, by their Help, the Difficulties and Inconveniencies that arise, upon Variety of changing Circumstances, in the Application of natural Laws, such as cannot be provided for but by *positive* Laws, there being no Provision or Regulation concerning them in the natural Laws themselves. 2. The second Cause or Source of those *positive* Laws, is the variable Introduction of certain Usages or Customs (general, or particular) esteem'd useful to Society. Now the natural immutable Laws, and the better Observance of them, are included and provided for in their changeable various Circumstances, by these *positive* Laws; one Part of what they enjoin being a natural Right or Duty, whilst the other Part is of a *positive* Nature. And if the Excellency of those Laws will ever consist in the Influence and Tendency they have in better governing and well ordering

* Page 54.

the

CHAP. VI. the Society, which receive them for Laws, and ought to put them in due Practice: How admirably excellent are the three *Positives* of Christianity, as they are founded upon the natural Law of Gratitude, and keeping Engagement, and making Provision for our frail guilty Condition in this World; to the Intent of fulfilling and observing all the other natural immutable Laws to the greatest Perfection we are able?

BUT he could not be ignorant, that no human Legislator punishes for many of the Breaches of the Law of Nature; not for Neglect of Benevolence, (which is his grand Law of all) provided it extends not to actual Injury, which is the only Object of the Punishments of human Laws. As to the latter Part, we may readily believe both his Sincerity and Zeal likewise in rejecting for himself, and inducing others to reject the positive Institutions of Christianity. It would be injurious to his Memory, to imagine, that the Reasons of his Conduct were drawn from another World; but if he grounded his Contempt upon the Reason he intimates, *viz.* their being no Ways conducive to the *good of Society*, he is as far distant from the Truth, as he was from the Observance of such Institutions.

FOR the very End and Design of them is to promote Piety, Righteousness, and Sobriety to the highest Pitch; and Piety derives a Blessing, and Righteousness exalteth a Nation, and Sobriety makes the most useful, diligent Subjects. Besides, a due Compliance with them, lays the only sure Foundation for the most extensive Practice of Benevolence and Beneficence, which renders Society happy to Perfection. As our Obligations

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gations to Benevolence are drawn from the Law of Nature, they are a Theory of the Mind, not perceived by all, and consequently not productive of general Practice; but as it is learn'd and imparted in the Ordinance of the Lord's-Supper, it appears and distinguishes itself, indeed, in a Human Shape, and should carry with it *more* than human Persuasion, upon Earth.

WHAT makes for the greatest good of every Individual, must be for the greatest good of Society also: But what greater good can derive to particular Persons from these Institutions, than, by their Means, to live in Innocence, and general Love, and in the Sense of God's Favour, and in the Joy of Mind, and Peace of Conscience, that he is our Friend? That makes us love him, and that makes us keep his Commandments? *Justin Martyr*, in his primitive Account of the *Lord's-Supper*, accordingly says, that the departing Resolution and consequent Practice was *mutually, and almost always, to remind one another of these Things**, i. e. such practical Conclusions and Emendation of Manners, suitable to his Commandments, which naturally flowed from commemorating their Lord in that Holy Sacrament†. As Morality is the Tie and Happiness of Society, how dear to every Man should be the

* Ἡμεῖς ὅ μὲν ταῦτα λοιπὸν αἰεὶ τέτων ἀλλήλους ἀναμνησόμεν. *Apol.* 11. page 98. in Obedience to the Command, εἰς τὴν ἀνέμνησιν μὲν.

† *Euseb. Chronicon. præterea* (speaking of *Pliny's* famous Representation to *Trajan*, of the Christians singing an Hymn to Christ before Day at their *Eucharist*) *ad considerandam disciplinam vetari ab eis homicidia, furta, adulteria, latrocinia, & his similia. i. e.* they join'd in Remembrance of their Covenant, and confederate Discipline at that Solemnity, not to commit Murder, Adultery, Theft, or any such Crimes.

Means

Means which bind that Tie the faster upon every Man's Mind, as often as it grows loose? And blessed are they who hunger and thirst after such Means of Righteousness, for eating and drinking they shall be satisfied.

THAT our Author, therefore, pick'd a needless Quarrel with these Means, is a shrewd Evidence that he was not at Bottom, a true Friend to his own Law of Nature; because, if he had, he had certainly been better reconciled to these best of Means for obeying it, to the greatest Perfection that human Nature is now capable of; especially after natural Means failed of effecting it, as I have already observed.

As to what he says of the Hurt and Prejudice occasionally done to Society and particular Persons from these Means, it proves no more, than that the Abuse to which the best Things are liable, is no Manner of Argument against repeating the due Use of them. All that he harangues upon of the Want of Charity from the persecuting Effects of it, *pag.* 45, &c. 84, &c. 123, &c. with many other Deviations from true Religion; they lie at the Door of the Church of Rome: Let them answer to God and Man for it. True Christianity and his own Country are unconcerned in any of his Imputations. Now if these holy Means have a Connection with, and the revealed Commands from Heaven have a manifest Relation to the GOOD OF MEN, then Christianity having these Institutes, and I add Faith in the Mediator Jesus Christ for its Foundation, must, in conformity to a Test of his own appointing almost every where in his Book, be the true Religion, and no less certainly revealed from Heaven.

ESPECIALLY,

ESPECIALLY, if in the next Place, they are promotive also of the HONOUR OF GOD, which is his other Test. Our Author * has the Assurance to say, that these appointed Means “ have no Tendency to promote Righteousness, “ Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, and “ therefore can’t make us serviceable to Christ, “ or acceptable either to God or Man.” He must necessarily include these, by what he says of the Law of Liberty in the preceding Page †, which he affirms “ does not consist in a Freedom from Things of a moral Nature, for “ that would be perfect Slavery ; but from all “ those Things that are not of such a Nature.” But can any thing be more manifest, than that these excellent heavenly Means singularly promote the Things *wherein the Kingdom of God consists, Righteousness, Peace, [of Conscience, and Peace among Men] and Joy in the Holy Ghost ‡ ?* *be that in these Things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God.* And is not the Lord’s Supper in its Appointment both a *serving of Christ*, and a serving of these Things of his Kingdom ?

HE makes honouring God and Patriotism, synonymous Terms § : Supposing him in the Right in so doing ; What does that conclude ? Nothing at all against, but altogether in Behalf of the Sacred and most benign Institution of our Lord. For does not that, as oft as we have Recourse to it, more practically and particularly, than his Law of Nature, extinguish arising Enmities, put a Stop to Discord, and kin-

* Page 389. † Page 388. ‡ Rom. xiv. 15, &c.
§ Page 60.

HE argues * the Absurdity of *Positives* in Religion, because, as he imperfectly thinks all such to be grounded upon and supposes a *Change* in God. “ † After Men had been for many Ages “ in a miserable Condition, God thought fit to “ mend the eternal universal Law of Nature, by “ adding certain Observances to it, not founded “ in the Nature of Things.” And elsewhere ‡, “ Whatever Reason tells us is unworthy of having God for its Author, can never belong to “ true revealed Religion. And whatever is worthy of having God for its Author belongs to “ natural Religion. It is upon this Plan, says he, “ I have endeavoured to shew wherein true and “ genuine Christianity consists.”

IT was our Author’s unhappy Way of thinking hastily, and by halves, upon the Nature of Things, that occasioned all that Trouble to himself, in writing his Book, and that Danger and Unsettlement to his Readers in perusing his manifold Errors and Misrepresentations. Had he duly consider’d the Nature of God, or Man, or the Nature of the Relation between them ; he had never been so palpably guilty of the Absurdities he falsely endeavours to throw upon the Christian Revelations.

HE laid it down as a fundamental Truth, and therein I join with him, that every Work which proceeded out of the Hands of God, who is all perfect in Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, must be *perfect in its Kind*. Now, if Man was the

* Page 113, 114. † Page 173. ‡ Page 197.
VOL. I. O Work

CHAP. VI. Work of his Hands, and was made a moral, accountable Agent, What is the Perfection of a moral Agent *as such*? But to have all his Powers and Faculties adequately adjusted to obey the Will of his Maker without the least Dispute, or Reluctance; and to observe the Law that he gave him, without any Failure; only leaving him to the Liberty and Freedom wherewith he was distinguish'd and invested, to chuse Evil, or Good, Disobedience, or Obedience; for the Use of which Liberty, he was therefore made accountable, as an intelligent Agent, perfectly sensible of his Duty and Obligations how to act. If he had chose the Good of obeying, for his whole Duration, he had acted according to his Nature; but as he chose the Evil of Disobedience, as has been related before, still he acted according to his free primitive Nature; nor could God then have interposed, unless he would have hindered Man from acting accordingly, or ceas'd himself from governing according to the Nature of Things he had made; either of which had been inconsistent with his Divine Perfections.

AND if we are as sure that this must have been the *original* Perfection of Man, as we are sure God is perfect: It remains as demonstrably certain, as Matter of Fact, feeling Experience, and the Confession of all Men, can make any thing so, that there must have been a *Change* in *Man*, or a Fall from a State of Innocence and Integrity, to a State of Sin and Transgression. Since there is no where to be found in our sublunary World, that *first* Perfection of our Nature; but instead of it, in all Nations, and Places, and Persons, a Condition and Constitution of Imbecility and Frailty towards our Duty, and the Law that

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that is given us. There is none that doth Good CHAP. VI. without some Mixture of Evil, no, not one; nor is there one righteous, free from all Blemish and Defect.

HAD our Author drawn up his Law of Nature into a written System, (and it had very well became him to have built up something uniform, since he was so busy in *pulling down*, p. 381.) he would have found himself, in spite of all his boasted Sufficiency of Reason, wounded with his own Sarcaſm, which he throws out so often against the Holy Scripture, *the Letter killeth*: It must have been known to God and his own Conscience, that he was as much wanting in exact Obedience, as many of his Neighbours. Nay, in one or two Places he owns the *Imperfection* of human Nature; pag. 18. "Thus from the Consideration of our own *Imperfections*, which we continually feel; and the Perfections of our Creator, which we constantly find in all his Works, we may arrive at the Knowledge of our Duty." Page 21. "In this Life we are imperfect ourselves," and by owning that, he acquits God of it, by his own Concession. That He is immutable in his own Nature, every body grants; at the same time none offer to deny, that Man was made *changeable*; and consequently must own he was the guilty Cause of that great Alteration, for the worse, in his present Nature.

IT remains therefore plain to a Demonstration, that the Nature of the *Relation* between God and Man, was changeable and mutable in *one* of the Relatives; and that it was not, could not be *immutable*, on Man's Part. And yet upon this false Foundation of its *Immutability*,

lity, and *that* unchangeable Nature of Things, has he confidently grounded his sorry Reasonings, or rather paulty Declamations against the Revelation of the Gospel; and built up the fallacious System, the Hay and Stubble of his tottering Book; which will remain just as true, but can be no truer, than the Principle he has so laboriously built it upon. How justly do those opprobrious Reflexions fall upon his own *Work*? "If God requires nothing of his Creatures but what tends to their good, whatever is of this Kind, is a Superstructure that belongs to the Law of Nature; or in other Words, what the Reason and Nature of Things themselves plainly point out to us; and for all other Matters which have no Tendency, you must seek another Foundation, another Nature very different from the Divine, to build your Hay and Stubble upon." *Pag. 59.*

WHAT he vilifies under these Names are no less than the distinguishing Glories of Christianity above the Light of Nature. But what seems to be the *Foolishness of God* in the Estimate of these opiniative, prejudiced Men, will be found wiser than any of their Conceits; and what they despise as his *Weakness*, will be found stronger than any of their Arguments. That they have a Tendency to the good of Men, has been proved already, in Part; and it will be as apparent, that they are *worthy to have God for their Author*, not only upon that Account, but because they are a Copy of the Nature of our Almighty and most merciful Father; and are exhibited unto Men for promoting the *Honour and Glory* of the Divine Majesty.

WITH

WITH what admirable Œconomy and Wisdom this is consulted and illustrated, and our Notions of the Goodness of God, and all his moral Perfections and Attributes, rectified, and perfected, will better appear, when I treat of the Mediator, who is the appointed Head of all the Means for accomplishing the Religion of the End, which glorifies our Father who is in Heaven. Mean time, it may suffice to wipe off some of the Aspersions cast upon these *positive Excellencies* of Christianity by our Author; as if they were of no other Use in the World, but to dishonour God. But if his pretended Arguments absolutely and entirely fail of proving any thing like it; then he will be found to have been the Dishonourer of God, a Blasphemer of Him, and his true Religion.

Now, though the Gospel forbids nothing that the Law of Nature commands, nor commands what that forbids; it is no Consequence, that the Gospel has made no advantageous Revelation, or necessary Addition; or that the Addition it makes, must therefore be a *Superstition*. His Words are, *pag. 57.* "Nor can any Thing be a Part of Religion by one Law, [the Gospel] which by the other [the Law of Nature] is Superstition." And immediately follows, "Nor can Revelation make that the Will of God, which the Light of Nature continually represents as unworthy [on Account of that Superstition] of having God for its Author."

HERE is a bold Charge indeed! The making *reveal'd Religion* the Commander of Superstition. Men indeed, for want of using the Reason and Consideration that God has given them, may take

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VI.

an Occasion that was never given them, to be guilty of Superstition, by mistaking the Means as more necessary than the End of Religion; or by introducing Superstition, nay Idolatry into the Rites of it. But the Fault must be in the Persons guilty, the Revelation is blameless, its Commands and Institutions have a plain Design and a direct Tendency to the contrary. So far from corrupting Religion in its Means, that it is the greatest Improvement of the same, as I have made appear. So far from giving wrong Notions of God as a Ruler and Governor; that it illustrates all the Perfections of him who is the most wise and perfect Governor over our moral World. Here are no *Hieroglyphicks*, nor are there any *Charms*; nor are these any *mechanical* Ways of Salvation; nor is there any outward Shew capable of amusing or engrossing the Senses, to the diverting and disturbing the Mind.

WHAT then can he mean by the following Paragraph, but to confound and impose upon his Readers? "If Men have been at all Times oblig'd to avoid Superstition, and embrace true Religion, there must have been at all Times sufficient Marks of Distinction; which could not arise from their having different Objects, since God is the Object of both; but from the having different Notions of him and his Conduct: Nay, allowing that the Light of Nature was sufficient to teach Men, that true Religion consists in entertaining such Notions of God, as are worthy of him; and Superstition in such as are unworthy of him; yet that alone would not enable Men, when they came to Particulars, to distinguish one from the other: And, therefore, the same Light of

Nature

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"Nature must teach them what Notions are worthy, and what unworthy of having God for their Author. But how can there be such Marks flowing from the Nature of Religion and Superstition, if what is Superstition by the Light of Nature, can, notwithstanding these Marks, be made a Part of Religion by Revelation?" *Pag. 119.*

SUPPOSING the Light of Nature was sufficient to teach Men what Notions are worthy, and what are unworthy of having God for their Author; and so to distinguish between true Religion and Superstition: Why has not he by the Help of that Light of Nature, produced some Instances of Notions unworthy to have God for their Author, as applicable to *these* Positives of Christianity under present Consideration? He has very often, and as falsely as often, affirm'd such Calumnies against them; yet never once offer'd a single Argument, or the least Shadow of one to prove it. But if bold senseless Affirmations, are instead of Arguments with him; I hope they wont so pass upon his Readers, who deserve better Treatment from such a pretending Reasoner, whatever these good and great Instances of Christ's Religion have met with from him.

THEY are indeed, as set forth in Scripture, intended as an effectual *Cure* of all Superstition and Idolatry, which had mix'd, or can mix, with the natural Means of Religion in the Worship of God, through the Heathen, or the corrupted Christian World. That *Baptism* was design'd for wholly putting off, and throwing Idolatry aside, is evident, because the idolatrous Nations,

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Eph.

CHAP. VI. *Eph. xi. 3.* are called *Children of Wrath* in the Apostle's inoffensive Way of joining himself in the Expression; but are hereby made Children of the Covenant, and by Adoption Sons of God, and of Grace. That the *Lord's-Supper* is intended as a *Preservative* of our Communion with the *one true* Mediator of Worship, against *Idolatry*, and the Superstition of false Worship of God, from a Communion with *false* Mediators (such are all *Dæmons*) is plain from that of the Apostle, *ye cannot drink the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of Devils, ye cannot be Partakers of the Lord's Table, and the Table of Devils.* It is very hard that the sovereign Medicine should be called the Disease, and by those who seldom, or never try it.

BUT how comes it to pass, that his Light of Nature, so sufficient as he says it is, never yet in all the past, nor in the present, (nor perhaps in all the future) Generations of the *Heathen* World, has been, or shall be able to supply Men with such worthy Notions of God, as to abolish, or so much as lessen the infinite Superstitions and Idolatries which have reign'd, to the Scandal of human Reason, and the Pity of the Light of Nature? What pitiful Arguments then must his be for deriving, generally, worthy Notions of God from the Light of Nature, when they run counter to Matter of Fact; and all the World can contradict him, with a safe Conscience?

NAY, I will add further, that these *Positives*, grounded as they are in the Faith of our Mediator dying a Propitiation for our Sins, were intended (and perhaps that is the Foundation of all his Spleen and Dislike) to have cured him, and all others of his way of thinking, of a Supersti-

tion

CHAP. VI. tion that they actually lie under *Themselves*, and which they take no care to reform, whilst they calumniate others with the Crime; I mean their false, flattering, overweening Notions of the Goodness of God, as Governor of Mankind: That must certainly be Superstition, in the truest Account of it, which adds any Notion to any *moral* Attribute of GOD, contrary to what it really is; and so unworthy of it, as to have an ill Effect upon our Behaviour towards Him, our Neighbour, Ourselves; or, in other Words, so to behave towards the Religion of the Means, as to retard the Progress of the Religion of the End.

AND if it is too true, in Fact, that Persons of his way of thinking, love to distinguish themselves, by accumulating more Notions and Ideas to the Goodness of God, than is consistent with his Wisdom in governing the sinful Race of Men; and thence take occasion to think so unworthily of the Divine Conduct, as not to allow him to reveal to the World some deterring Mark, nor any awful, affecting Monument of his Displeasure against Sin, and of the foul Dishonour offer'd him in the Breach of his Laws; which could not before, but might be reveal'd presently after the *first* Transgression; the *Promise* of the Remedy being the first Dawn, and seminal Principle whence all after Revelation grew up to maturity: If it is as bad an Extreme to imagine, that God is not displeased at a just Provocation, as to think he can be angry without a Cause: And if these flattering unworthy Notions of God and his Goodness, have, by direct Tendency, so bad an Influence upon their own Conduct, as to make them indifferent to sincere Repentance, and

and Prayer to God ; and in Consequence of that, more careless and indolent to the Performance of the Religion of the End ; their impious and ungodly Notion of Sin, being no *Injury to God*, and consequently harmless, precludes Repentance ; and instead of Praying to Him, like other Men, with Ideas, Intercourses, or Petitions cloathed with Words, invigorated and realized with Presential, verbal Addresses, they content their indolent, no Devotion with *Silently* offering up Incense to their own conceited Fancies of his indolent Goodness : Such as no Governor would accept, or any Subject but themselves offer to Confide in, or deceive themselves by, how can these Men excuse themselves from Superstition ? Or how pretend to enjoy true Religion ? What room then for that Expostulation ? *Pag. 41.* “ If Faith in God himself no more than any other Act of Religion, is required for God’s Sake, but our own ; can Faith in one sent by God be required for any other End ? ” I only wish they would verily and indeed apply it to that End ; and then there would be an End of their Disputing.

OUR Author is not satisfied with heaping up these Reproaches, but accuses them perhaps in an hundred Places of his Book, of being merely *arbitrary, arbitrarily commanded, commanded for commanding Sake, from mere Will and Pleasure.* “ Where an instituted Religion differs from that of Nature, its Precepts must be arbitrary, as not founded in Nature and the Reason of Things, but dependent upon mere Will and Pleasure.” “ * If Revelation

* Page 99.

“ requires

“ requires more than the Relation of Things require, it would argue the Author of it to be of a tyrannical Nature, imposing upon his Subjects.” And he draws this Consequence from his supposed Arbitrariness, “ If God can command some things arbitrarily, we can’t be certain, but he may command all Things so ; for though some Commands should relate to Things in their own Nature good, yet how can we know that an arbitrary Being commands them for this Reason ; and, consequently, since an arbitrary Will may change every Moment, we can never be certain of the Will of such a Being *.” If God be “ an arbitrary Being, what a miserable Condition will Mankind be in ! Since an arbitrary Will might change every Moment, and those Things which entitled Men to God’s Favour To-day, might make them incur his Displeasure To-morrow : Nay, he might at the same time have a secret Will opposite to his reveal’d Will ; or might have different Wills for every different Person †.

THE Consequence is true enough, and very dismal, if the Premises were true ; and therefore he ought to have been very sure of that, before he ventured to asperse God and his Religion at that rate. I suppose he means by an *arbitrary Command*, such as has no Reason, nothing but the mere Will and Pleasure of the Commander to support it. But this is very far from being the Case of the *Positives* we are speaking of, improperly indeed so called ; because that too much includes the Idea of what he imputes to them. It has been before shewn, in treating of them, that they have abundant Rea-

* Page 117.

† Page 26.

sons,

CHAP. VI. sons, all tending to the Benefit and Service of Man, for their Institution; and that they have a powerful, moral Operation upon us, for promoting both the Means and the End of true Religion. They are not good merely because they are commanded; but such is the Excellency of the Divine Commandments in the Christian Revelation, that whenever they are generally obligatory, and suppletory to the Law of Nature, they are likewise founded in, and adjusted to the Nature and Reason of Things; I mean, the changed State, the alter'd Relation, the fallen, peccant, different Nature of Man, which was introduced into the World upon the Entrance of Transgression; reveal'd, 'tis true from Heaven to us, as to its first Introduction; but so true, that our Reason plainly perceives that there must have been a State of Innocence; and our Nature as plainly feels the Alteration to this Day.

THEY proceed from the Interposition and Favour of Heaven, as *secondary* Laws; but as much adapted to the new *secondary* State of our moral World, as the Law of Nature proceeding from the Relation between God and Man, was adapted to the primary State of Man, at his first Creation. And as these Laws profess to have it for their Aim and Design, to recover Man to Obedience to the first primary Law of the Religion of the End, which is the Perfection and Happiness of his Nature, as far as Man is now capable of performing it; if the first Laws are primarily moral, the other may fitly be reckon'd *secondarily* moral; and ought to be obey'd as such, by all who are blessed and acquainted with the Revelation; they are not then arbitrary, but

CHAP. VI. but holy, just, and good, and as plainly fit and useful to the Eye of Reason, as Colours are evident to the Eye of the Body. Like the Works of God, they carry in them the Marks of Divinity, being likewise founded in the Nature and Reason of Things, first made known, and then easily discern'd, by a Revelation from the God of Nature; wherein the Law of the *Remedy* appears as much to be a Transcript of the Mercy of God, and the Nature and Perfection of the *Mediator, God-Man*, as the Law of primitive Nature is a Transcript of the other moral Perfections of God, as will appear when I treat of the Mediator.

THOUGH a Man's Conscience does not smite and challenge him for omitting *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*, as it does for Omission or Transgression of the Duties and Obligations of natural Religion; being each of them Matter of pure *Institution* and Revelation; yet being wisely superadded, in *Aid* of our impotent Nature in using the Means, and performing the Ends of the Religion of Nature, inviting and engaging our own Concurrence; after the Invitation is closed with, and the Engagement undertaken, profess'd, and solemnly recogniz'd, they also smite the Conscience into a Reformation, upon the Violation of the Vows and Promises therein made, and repeated.

THUS Baptism serves to represent and enlighten us with the true State of human Nature, beset, as it is, within and without, by Temptations, and Enemies to Virtue. There is a Concupiscence to Evil, and there is likewise a Concupiscence to Good, inherent to every Man; Virtue

CHAP. VI. Virtue being agreeable to the native Dictates of his Mind, approving what bears that Character, and condemning the contrary; for *the Spirit* as truly *lusteth against the Flesh*, as this does against that.

BUT the weakest Part needs the most Help—Help is brought by these *Sacraments*, solemnly calling out, lifting, and lifting up the Mind, as oft as it flags, to its due Elevation, Rule, and Rectitude, above all the opposing Things in this World; in Pursuance of the Paths of Virtue, and in Prospect of its glorious Reward in *Christ*. As the *Holy Spirit* is the Promise and the Privilege of entering into that Covenant, and of the Return of Prayers purposely made for the *baptized*, in the *Name* of the *Mediator* of that Covenant; so the recognizing that Covenant, and the like Prayers for the *Communicants*, will be the renewing in the Mind that blessed Privilege and Assistance, in the *Lord's Supper*. And though Repentance goes before Baptism in the Aged, and Repentance and Prayer precede the other Sacrament, yet they both receive their continual Encouragement and Vigour from the last: Men go on, and grow up in the Confirmation and Strength of Virtue and Godliness; and refresh themselves by times with Joy and Consolation, in the due Use and Repetition of the last. Though one Sacrament enters the Man into a State of Pardon and Salvation, it is the latter that recognizes and secures the former, till our Lord's coming again.

THE Inference therefore that our Author draws from Dr. Prideaux's Words will be of no Service to his Cause, though he repeats the Words three or four times, and lays the Stress of

of a Touchstone upon them, pag. 384. and elsewhere. The Words are these, "If the Gospel varies from the Religion of Nature in any particular, or in the minutest Circumstance, is contrary to its Righteousness; that is strong enough to destroy the whole Cause; and make all Things else that can be said for its Support, totally ineffectual." Had he been so just, as to have cited the Words immediately following, they would effectually have confuted the Argument drawn from that Authority. "But it is (says he) so far from having any such Flaw therein, that it is the perfectest Law of Righteousness which was ever yet given unto Mankind; and both in commanding of Good, as well as in forbidding Evil, vastly exceeds all others that went before it, and prescribes much more to our Practice in both, than the wisest and highest Moralist was ever able without it to reach in Speculation."

IT is certain, that the Gospel does not vary from the Law of Nature in any particular, or in the minutest Circumstance, contrary to the Righteousness of that Law; but, on the contrary, promotes it in every Particular, and in every Circumstance; commanding what that commands, and forbidding what that forbids; still it does not follow that the Law of Nature and the Gospel are the same, or that the last adds nothing more effectual and explicit to the first. He knew in his Conscience, that the Gospel recommends and enforces *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*, the Doctrine of *the true Mediator*, and the *Resurrection of the Body*, as its peculiar Excellencies, unknown to his Law of Nature. And every Body else does them that Justice, as to confess, that

CHAP. that by their Help, *they can do all Things through*
 VI. *Christ thus strengthening them*, as well Repentance
 and Prayer, as the Religion of the End in all its
 Branches, impracticable by *Apostates* from Christianity.

I WOULD therefore ask his Admirers, whether they believe he has thrown out all these bitter Reflections against the Religion of his Country (not true, because we are born to it; but because it approves itself to be the true Religion that came down from Heaven, against all Arguments to the contrary) *ignorantly*, or *wilfully*: If *ignorantly*, he deserves to be contemned for knowing no better; if *wilfully*, to be shunn'd as a wicked Writer.

BUT I hope, tho' he ridicules Miracles as any Testimony, *pag.* 169, 170. they will, upon better Consideration, perceive there are *internal* Excellencies, moral Truth, and Evidences of these Christian Doctrines, sufficient to prove them to come from God: And as they carry no Notions with them *unworthy to have Him for their Author*, they will, upon our Author's own Plan, *pag.* 197. admit them to be true and genuine Christianity. He, in part, confesses the Use of a Revelation: "But first I must premise, that in supposing an
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Pag. 8.

Pag. 8. And elsewhere, "It might be agreeable CHAP.
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BUT what Need of *sufficient* Evidence of such a Person's coming from God, when he means nothing by Revelation but the Republication of the Law of Nature? That is another of our Author's *Inconsistencies*; he affirms every where, agreeably to the Scope of his Book, that the Light of Nature is that all-sufficient, all-perfect Guide for finding out the Law of Nature, or his Gospel; that he that runs may read, and as certainly and unerringly as the Eye distinguishes Colours, or the Ear Sounds. What occasion then for *sufficient Testimony*? Would he have Miracles wasted upon proving that which no body could miss of? It is not the Republication of that Law which is so much wanted, nor yet an Example of exact Obedience to it, which is very valuable: But *those very Things*, which our Author either ignorantly or wilfully rejects and abuses, and what every Body else means by *Christianity*; those comfortable and divine Means, which God in his great Mercy and Compassion has appointed for saving Sinners, *i. e.* all Mankind; being the most reasonable and effectual that can possibly be proposed for assuring Men of the Pardon of their Sins, and yet at the same time securing better Obedience to the Religion of the End.

AND therefore it is intreated of those *Deists* that they would, and it is hoped that when they have consider'd better of the Connexion of these worthy Means with that noble End, they will,
 VOL. I. P for

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CHAP. VI. for the Sake of that noble End, and for their own Comfort and Advantage every Way, think them worthy of all Acceptation. They must conceive an Indignation against our Author, as a common Enemy to Mankind, (possess'd as they were with an universal Persuasion that God in his great Goodness *can* interpose in their greatest Exigence) when in his arrogant Dictature to God himself, out of his Light of Nature, he tells them " what he can, or *cannot* command," pag. 89. implying the Impossibility of the Grace, or Revelation of such Things; and all upon the silly, stupid, baffled Foundation, as it follows, because " God *is immutably the same for ever.*"

AND seeing he offers no better Reasons for setting aside the most rational System of compleat true Religion, that is in the World; they would think it high time to alter their Opinion of their Two Oracles, and their Performances, set them both aside, and become true Christians.



CHAP.



CHAP. VII.

*The CHOICE, and APPOINTMENT of
the MEDIATOR.*

IT is natural for every Sinner, *i. e.* every Man, to confess, from the feeling of his own Experience, that Sin and Transgression creates a Strangeness and Distance between God and himself, more or less, according to the Quantity and Quality of his Offences; and that a Load of conscious Guilt, by a kind of centrifugal Propensity, carries him from the Center of his chief Good; not easy to be recover'd, or brought round again to his proper Sphere, without some powerful Attraction intervening. For that Strangeness and Distance would otherwise be gathering Strength from the Law, which is the Strength of Sin; and from our Weakness in not being able to keep it with an exact Obedience. The Law is *holy, just, and good*, and because we are not like to it in Compliance, it condemns the Conscience of Guilt, and delivers it over to Punishment.

It has been observ'd before, that the natural Means of Recovery, Repentance, and Prayer, had in a manner lost their Force, were become lifeless and dispirited; operated as incompetent Means; or, at best, but as incomplete ones.

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CHAP. VII. This introduces the *Need* of the Mediator, *Christ Jesus*; who is the efficacious Head of all the Means for recovering Man to the Performance of the Religion of the End, according to the Ability of his present State.

AND as the Idea of a MEDIATOR consists in not being a Mediator, *ex parte*, but between two, *God and Man*: The first Enquiry is, who shall *appoint* this Mediator? The Answer is, GOD. *Job* was sensible of this*, *He is not a Man as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in Judgment.* Neither is there any *Days-Man* (*μεσότης*, Umpire, Mediator in LXX.) betwixt us, that might lay his Hand upon us both. If one Man sin against another, God [the civil Magistrate, one of the called Gods in Scripture] shall judge him; but if a Man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him†? The New Testament gives in the adequate Answer: Who indeed should appoint, but He who was to accept? How much soever the Interposition of a Mediator may be to the Satisfaction of the offending Inferior, and to the Relief of his Wishes and Distresses; yet the *Honour* of the Superior, the Heavenly King, upon the Reparation of which all depends, is so much at *his Choice*, that none but he was proper, none but he could have any Authority to determine it. Man could with Certainty pitch upon none but whom he was acquainted with; but every one of his own kind is too mean and incompetent to be thought of. Therefore God seeing there was none to help, laid help upon one, a mighty one, unknown to us, the Son of his Bosom, the next to Himself.

* *Job* ix. 32, 33.

† *1 Sam.* ii. 25.

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HE is the *offended* Party, and consequently knows best the Degree of his own Displeasure, and what Terms of Reconciliation will appear to the rational World most glorious to himself; at the same time they are most advantageous unto Man. Besides, he is a Superior of that infinite Distance, that any Terms, practicable by Man, had been Favour and Condescension enough, tho' never so difficult of Performance. And every Sovereign, when inclined to shew Favour to a rebellious Subject, has an undoubted Right to *propose* the Conditions, and *appoint* the Terms, upon which he shall be taken into Favour, and to what Degree of Favour. If no Terms had been publish'd for the Rebel to comply with, as a publick Satisfaction to the Sovereign, there had been no Reconcilement; or, if he took other Methods which he thought proper to reinstate himself, there could be no Hopes of Favour, because no Compliance to the *Terms* that Favour was condition'd upon. It is the *Appointment* therefore of the Terms, that gives *Being* to a State of Reconciliation, and without that there could be no Right to, nor Claim of Favour.

As Man, therefore, can't pretend to be the offended Party, it must be a great Presumption in Persons of our Author's Way of thinking, to incroach upon this common Right of the sovereign Lord of the Universe, by refusing to comply with his *known* Terms and Conditions; and substituting others short of them, (as will afterwards appear) I mean bare Repentance, and Dependance upon the Goodness of God, exclusive of *Faith* in the *Mediator*, as all-sufficient to make their Peace with him, upon their own Bottom.

P 3

WHAT

WHAT though God is every where present, hearing the Prayers of all mortals, though he is more willing to hear than we to pray; can that be a good reason to supersede the need of a Mediator? By the same argument, the prayers of the supplicant would likewise be superseded, seeing he knows all his wants, and is able to relieve without his application. But the appointment of a Mediator gives the supplicant a true notion of the Nature of himself as he is a *Sinner*, and also of the Nature of God, being *Holy*, as well as good; and that there can be no approach nor communication between the Purity of one nature and the Sinfulness of the other, but by the *Intervention* of him, whom he appointed to *reconcile all Things unto himself, whether they be Things in Earth, or Things in Heaven*. Through whose Mediation therefore he forgives what our Conscience is afraid of, and gives more than we desire or deserve.

BUT by their false, disjointed Notion of the Goodness of God to the exclusion of his Holiness, they undervalue and disparage the Divine Appointment; under a false Shew of Humility, they arrogantly take upon themselves to dishonour all the Divine Attributes, concern'd in the Government of Men; and endeavour to deprive Mankind of the greatest Comfort and Blessing in this World. Where Man is indeed the offended Party (as is often the Case between Man and Man) he has an undoubted Right, in Virtue of the Injury he has received, to depute his own Judgment of, or Satisfaction expected for it, to an Umpire of *his own choosing*, some *third* Person, more righteous and impartial than himself in such a Case: But in the other

other Case, there is neither natural Equality, nor receiv'd Injury to be pretended, on Man's Side. CHAP.
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IT is just and fit then, that God should have the *Appointment* of the Mediator, or that atoning Person, who was to administer to him in *Things pertaining to himself*. And no Person taketh this Honour to himself, but he that is called, or accepted of by God. Now no Man knoweth the Things of God, but the Spirit of God; therefore no Man must presume to think of any Mediator, but whom his Spirit revealeth. His very appointing and accepting him is an uncontestable Argument of his Love to the World, and of his previous relenting Mercy for pardoning penitent Sinners, and of his being the Saviour of the World; and in Consequence of his Appointment, sending him into the World to illustrate all his *moral*, brightest Perfections, before Angels, Men and Sinners, in that chosen Method of doing it.

AFTER God had been so gracious to grant a New Testament or Covenant, and some *Surety* of that Covenant had been required, and the Choice of that Surety left to Man; Man must have chose some obnoxious Scrub like himself, *neither harmless nor undefiled, nor without many Sins*, to be sure somebody that would be *partial* to Man, without due Regard to God's Honour, and Dignity; and therefore justly refusable by God, as being himself as much indebted to him, in the vindictive Part of his Law, as those he pretended to engage for, or undergo any thing in their Stead; and consequently too partial, and unequal to be any thing like a *Mediator*, or *Atoner*: For any Sinner, *i. e.* any Man to pretend to atone for Sin, is to add Sin to Sin, in lieu of atoning for it.

CHAP. VII. *it.* And in this, the great Presumption and moral Iniquity of *Idolatry* seems to consist; ninety nine Parts in a Hundred of the *Idolatry* of the World consisting in the *Choice* and *Worship* of a *false* Mediator between God and Man. Such wrong Introduction, or false Foundation in coming to God embues the whole System of *Worship* and *Service* with false Fears, and Hopes; with irregular, impious Prayer, with no Repentance, or that which is fallacious; in short, with all Sorts of *artificial* Methods of making Men religious without Virtue, *i. e.* without Religion. *Idolatry* (the same may be said of *Superstition*) being nothing else but an Equivalent, *invented* by Men, and encouraged by the Devil, to satisfy the Conscience, and at the same Time indulge the Flesh, therefore call'd its *Work*; because in the Nature of Cause and Effect, a Debauchery of the Morals, follows a Debauchery of the true Mediator. When Man, not God, attempts to appoint and take upon him to assign a Mediator of his own Head, the *Intention* of serving, or the pretended *relative* *Worship* of the true God, through whatever uncommanded Mediators of Intercession, or before forbidden Images of any Sort, is equally the Sin of *Idolatry*, the Thing that God hateth all the World over, in Heathen, or in Popish Countries: For was that *Intention*, or that *relative* *Worship* sufficient to excuse from *Idolatry*, there could be no such Thing as *Idolatry* in the World; because the *Heathens* in their Idols, Images, or Statues equally distinguish'd and pretended *relative* *Worship* ultimately to the Supreme God, as much as the *Papists*.

BUT when God approv'd the Surety himself, he obliged himself to accept him, paying down

CHAP. VII. down the Debt of our Punishment, (the Mult of Death) purely and absolutely on our Account, and to release us from it: The Debt of Death being thus paid by the Mediator, Acknowledgments are due both to him who pays it for us, and especially to him who *accepts* the Tender of such Payment, in acquittal of the worst Consequences of that Debt; *therein, or, now it is, that the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in him*, John xiii. 31. whilst we still are left to pay, and every Man does actually pay the temporary Fine, the Separation of Soul and Body; yet the *Redemption of the Body* being effected by him, we are justify'd in the *Body* from the second or everlasting Death, as well as in the Soul from Sin.

AND he who was called and made Choice of, was no less willing to proffer himself to the Work. It is the *Creditor*, not the Debtor, who has the Choice of the *Surety*. Therefore the Mediator of the new and better Covenant, the High Priest of our Profession, was called, *consecrated, inaugurated* by God himself. In a perfect Reconcilement between such a Superior and Inferior, there must be honourable Terms provided for the former, or none at all. The Proposal of them in all Reason, Deference, and Decency, must always and only be allow'd to come from the *offended Superior*: Forasmuch as that is the only Way he can in Honour treat, or be treated with. Having a Right to our Obedience which we continued not in; a Right as our Governor still remain'd in him, to reclaim us to Homage and Duty, by any Methods of Grace he liked best, without consulting us.

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BECAUSE our Business is to obey, not offer to make Amendments in the Terms of an *Aët* of Grace; not propound, but receive Conditions of Peace, whatsoever God, or the Mediator sent by him, shall reveal to be his Will and Pleasure. Thus the Proposal regularly came, as it did, first from him principally, who was *principally* offended, *i. e.* God the Father. For this Reason the Gospels, especially *St. John's*, so very much represent Christ to be the SON OF GOD, sent from God, or the Father, for that Purpose. Shewing the Doctrine to be of God the Father, not from the Messiah himself; much less a Revelation from Flesh and Blood, but from the Father*. Though the Gospels and *Aëts* of the Apostles don't mention the Word Mediator, they describe him in Terms equivalent. *As Son of God, and Son of Man; as saving us from our Sins; giving his Life a Ransom for many; and his Blood, the Blood of the New Testament for the Remission of Sins; and preaching Repentance in his Name to all the World for Remission of Sins; and as procuring all Blessings to those who pray for them in his Name; that all Men should honour him, even as they honour the Father, and as they believe in one, should believe also in the other †; and the preaching*

* *Mat. xvi. 17.* This explains *John iv. 44.* No Man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him: Because a Mediator or Advocate, in whose Name all things were to be done, is not an Advocate or Mediator of one; but God [the Father] is one Party, and Man the other; he is not a Mediator between God and God, or Man and Man, but God and Man; for God being necessarily but one, the other Party must be Man: If you know two Angles of a Triangle, you are consequentially drawn to know the other.

† See the Reasons why the Gospels were not, could not be so explicit as the Epistles. *Bishop of London's Past. 3. pag.*

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ing the Word of Reconciliation, *i. e.* preaching Peace by Jesus Christ, he is Lord of all, that the Churches were purchased by his Blood*. And the Epistles, which very often expressly mention the Mediator, represent God in Christ reconciling the World to himself, when we are said, to be saved by Grace, through Faith, in this Mediator, not of ourselves, it is the Gift of God †: For which Reason, Faith is affirm'd to come from Hearing; Hearing from the Word of God; the Word of God from Sending; not of Man, but God's sending his Son, (so often called the Word) who sent his Apostles, who sent others to perpetuate the Gospel of Peace, or the Word of Reconciliation between God and Man, to the End of the World. And because our Lord Jesus Christ is the undertaking Head of all the Means of Reconciliation and Salvation, therefore are we sometimes saluted and blessed with the Grace of God; sometimes with the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ singly ‡. What are the Ends proposed from this Appointment, will best appear under the Office of our Mediator, as soon as we have previously consider'd,

18, 24, &c. 32, &c. and 78, &c. where the Opinion of those who make the Gospels the only, or chief Rule of Faith, is clearly refuted.

* *Eph. xi. 8. Heb. x. 10.*

† *Rom. x. 15.*

‡ *Rom. xvi. 24. 1 Cor. xvi. 24. Gal. vi. 18. Eph. vi. 24. Phil. iv. 23. 2 Thes. iii. 16, 18. 2 Tim. iv. 22. Philem. 25.*

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CHAP. VIII.

The Nature and Person of the MEDIATOR.

IT is necessary to consider the *true Nature* of this appointed Mediator, because that is the Ground and Qualification for all his salutary Offices; and the more we are apprized of that, the stronger and more confident will be our Faith in the other. For such is the most admirable Reason and Wisdom of the Divine Appointments, in laying his general Laws and Commandments so firmly in the *Nature of Things*, as to secure all those good Effects, which God, or Man could expect from them. His Providence has frequently reveal'd and discover'd the Nature of Things for the Benefit of Man, which was unknown before. But the grand View and Project of all his Revelations purposely given to the Children of Men, at sundry Times, and divers Manners, was fully to unfold the Nature, and the Offices of this mighty Person, the Captain of Salvation, the Author and Finisher of our Faith.

WITHOUT Revelation assisting, our Reason could not have found it out, but *after* it is discover'd, it needs no Assistance to perceive it agreeable to the Nature of the best constituted Mediator, that the Reason of Man, or even the Wisdom of God could devise. Thus a Revelation from

from a superior Reason, the Perfection of all Reason, may kindly discover to, instruct, and improve inferior, weaker Reason, as (if great Things may be compar'd to small) a Sir *Isaac Newton* may make a Discovery in the natural World; and when, and *after* discover'd, the inferior Reason of all Men may approve, and rejoice in it as accurately and harmoniously adjusted to the Government of the natural World, as the other is to the moral. And if natural Light could not have reach'd the Discovery in one Case, as it might and did in the other; is not the Reason of Man infinitely benefited and obliged for the Illumination, and Salvation of such a Discovery? Perhaps, this mighty Deliverer, this *Word of God*, may, by his Condescension to their State and Nature, be the Saviour of many other laps'd embody'd Spirits in the manifold Systems of the Universe; for he is represented not only *faithful and true*, but to have on MANY Crowns, and a Name written, that no MAN knew but himself*.

ESPECIALLY, since by all the ablest Judges of Reason, it must be unanimously agreed, upon a thorough Examination, that the fittest and most complete Mediator between God and Man, ought certainly to be constituted, just as the Revelation represents, of the two Natures of both, and equally partaking of each, *Son of God*, and *Son of Man*; as the Medium of Communication, and the Center of Reconciliation exactly placed between both. The two Natures united together, don't make a middle Nature, but a middle Person acting by these two Natures; with Men, he is the Repre-

* Rev. xix. 11, 12.

representative of God; with God, the Representative of Men. As he has the Nature of Man, he differs from God he mediates with; and having the Nature of God, he differs from Man. Being thus constituted, he is sure to do equal Justice to both Parties, at Enmity. How should he not do right, how can he possibly wrong us, who are Bone of his Bone, and Flesh of his Flesh? Or how neglect the Rights, or infringe upon any of the Prerogatives of God, who is God himself, descended from the Bosom of his Father? therefore called *our* Righteousness, and also the Righteousness of *God*, and in both respects *the righteous one*; He is *our* Righteousness by being the *Sanctification* and *Acceptance* of that Righteousness, which is in our sincere Endeavours to perform: Thus God in the *Mediator* righteous, recapitulated all Righteousness in Heaven, and Earth. What makes the Execution of the Office of an Umpire so nice and difficult, and so constant a Jealousy attending it, of favouring one Side more than another? But the Want of a Medium that affords *sufficient* Security and Pledge to both Parties against the least Self-Interest or Partiality; and in Concern so equally distant from, and indifferent to each, as to be perfectly disinterested and impartial towards both. But in *this* Mediation, there is the *Tie of Nature* moreover to both the Parties; which is the highest Pledge and Security that can be given to each, that the Interest of both shall be equally thought of, and consulted. By virtue of his Divine Nature as Son of God, he is incapable of doing anything in his Mediation, but what should be to the Glory of God the Father, and the Illustration of the Attributes of the Deity; he is *faithful* in all his House with the Fidelity of a *Son*, who has an Interest

Interest himself therein, transcending the Faithfulness of any Servant: And as touch'd with our Infirmities, he is incapable of forgetting to be a *merciful* High Priest for us.

AND as in no other, but himself, was ever the true Nature of God, and the true Nature of Man united, in *one Christ*, so is he alone the *one true* Mediator, the *one best Medium* of Congruity that can ever be thought of, for establishing perfect Peace and Reconciliation; to the Intent, that both Parties might be secure, and are thereby admirably secured of an *equal* Interest in him; that the *Honour* and *Authority* of one might as well be consulted and saved; at the same Time, the *Sins* and *Weakness* of the other were condescended to, pity'd, and pardon'd, unto Salvation. Considering God as a *Governor*, and ourselves as his *Subjects*, if he would be extreme in rigour of *Justice*, to mark what we have done amiss, who could abide it? by the Deeds of the Law, and the Covenant of Works, no Flesh could stand in his Sight. If, on the other hand, he should be so extremely remiss in the Easiness of his *Goodness*, as to forgive upon every repeated Offence, without any farther Consideration or Condition; who would value to obey, or consider himself under Dominion, or bound by any Law to serve God? Therefore there must arise a *third* Person (seeing the Nature of God and his Attributes are immutable, and the natural obedient Powers of Man have been changed and alter'd) as a *Medium* of Justice, and a *Medium* of Goodness, to be dispensed to the Sons of Men.

AND because it required the utmost Wisdom of God to reconcile and accomplish this; therefore

fore the Person who came down from Heaven to effect it, is said to be the δ λόγος, the *Word* that was with God, and was God, the *supreme Reason* of all Things, and the *Wisdom* of God unto Man's Salvation. Thus the inferior *Wisdom* and *Reason* of Man may rest satisfy'd, that he shall be taken Care of by that Share or Moiety of Christ, his *human Nature*; as God the *Father* is taken Care of, by the other Moiety of his *Divine Nature* *.

AND this wonderful, mighty Counsellor, Prince of Peace, the Mediator between God and Man, being thus constituted of both Natures; *naturalizes* our Notion of, and Faith in him, to our Mind and Reason, and gives the greatest Assurance possible, that he is likewise in his *Office* the *surest*, the *justest*, the most *capable*, the most *acceptable* Mediator to both Parties that could be pitch'd upon, in all the Universe; and, at the same Time, affords the greatest Proof that God's Ways with Sinners are *equal*, and at an infinite Distance from *Arbitrariness*. Whom God reposes himself upon, we have all the Reason in the

* *Irenæus* and *Cyprian* speak sublimely upon this Union of the two Natures. *Opportuerat enim mediatorem dei & hominum per suam ad utroque domesticitatem, & ad amicitiam & ad concordiam utroque reducere, & facere, ut deus assumeret hominem, & homo se dederat deo. Qua enim ratione filiorum adoptionis ejus participes esse possemus, nisi per filium, eam quæ est ad ipsum, recepissimus ab eo communionem, nisi verbum ejus communicasset, caro factum?* *Iren.* Lib. III. cap. 20. *Indulgentiæ divinæ & gratiæ arbiter & magister, sermo & filius dei mittitur, qui per prophetas omnes illuminator & doctor humani generis prædicabatur, hic est virtus dei, hic ratio, hic sapientia ejus & gloria: hic in virginem illabatur, carnem spiritu sancto co-operante induitur. Deus semper cum homine miscetur, hic deus noster, hic Christus est, qui mediator duorum hominem induit, quem perducatur ad patrem.* *Cypr. de van. idol.*

World

World to confide in the same Person, since he is as *qualify'd* and *disposed* by *Nature*, as he is *authorized* by *Office* to make a thorough Reconciliation. What can be better adjusted than this Belief of his equal sharing both Natures, in the Fulness and Perfection thereof, for ascertaining us, who are apt to judge every one to stand affected, as they stand related by *Blood* and *Nature*, of the equal Concern, and all Perfection of this Mediator of Redemption, and Intercession for us?

MOSES was a Mediator, not by Nature, but *Office* only, chosen *first* by the People who were in a Consternation at the great quaking of the Mountain, luminous Appearances and Voices of the Majesty and Greatness of God, supernatural and terrible; and *approved* afterwards by God. But his Province was in the old Covenant, he had no Concern in the New. The Mosaic Statutes and Judgments, the special Policy of Rites, and the peculiar Ordinances of Ceremonies, were the old Original, *do this and live*, put under wholesome Discipline, into an actual Lineage and Preparation for the Birth of the Mediator of the explicitly appearing new and better Covenant: They terminated in this Life; therefore called *Statutes that were not good, and Judgments whereby they should not live* *; and the Burthen was so great,

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that

* *Ezek. xx. 25. Should not live*: The probable Sense is, should not live *always*; because the Design of Providence in those Statutes and Judgments concerning Meats, Sacrifice, and other Rites of Severation was temporary, to preserve them a peculiar Nation, a separate unmixing People from all the Nations round about, by Ordinances to eat and sacrifice what other Nations worshipped, as the Ox and his Tribe, the Sheep and Goat adored as Gods in Egypt, and to abstain from Meats, and the Manner of Dressing, which were probably in the greatest

CHAP. VIII. that neither their Fathers, nor any of their Children were able to bear: A Law by the Performance of which *merely*, no *Flesh* possibly could be justified, any more than by Obedience to the first original Law or Covenant; With respect to the *Jews* therefore call'd the *first* Covenant, couching under it the second and better, into which the Apostles endeavoured to lead them, as into the true Sense, End, and Meaning of the other.

WHILST all the Expectation they had of entering into Life was the same as the old Patriarchal Way, the Love of God and our Neighbour,

greatest Esteem with some Nations bordering on Canaan, as Blood, the *Flesh* of Swine, Birds of Prey, Fish without Scales, a Kid suck'd in its Mother's Milk, &c. All Communication in Victuals and Worship being so cut off, it was morally impossible for them, keeping those Statutes, to commix with other People during the Term they were to be separate. Still such occasional Statutes could not be so good as the moral Law, which obliged always, and equally in all Places. These Severation-Rites from other Nations are called *Statutes* and *Judgments*. See Lev. xx. 22, &c. And that Law of Ordinances was imposed upon that stiff-necked People, because of the great Transgression, IDOLATRY, of the Neighbour Nations, they were so prone to. Idolatry then being as modish, as French Fashions have been since to some People. God accordingly interposed his Authority, That after the idolatrous Doings of the Land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do, and after the Doings of the Land of Canaan, whither I shall bring ye, shall ye not do, neither shall ye walk in their Ordinance, Lev. xviii. 3. Ye shall be holy unto me, for I have sever'd you from other People, that ye should be mine, Lev. xx. 26. Tacitus accordingly represents their Character, Lib. XXI. As "a People whose religious Usages were contrary to all the World besides, that what to others was most sacred, they accounted prophane, and on the contrary allowed and observ'd what by others was forbidden." And Dion Cassius affirms, "They were distinguish'd from all others both in their Way of Living, and Religion," Lib. XXXVII.

in Hopes of the PROMISE of the Covenant of Grace; which Covenant, as to the End of it, was couch'd under the Decalogue, wrote, not by *Moses*, but by the Finger of the Mediator of it, upon Tables called the *Tables of the Covenant*, kept in an Ark, called the *Ark of the Covenant*; and as to the Mediator of it, veiled under the Prophecies, Types, and Shadows of the good Things to come; renew'd with *Abraham* in the Sanction of Faith, extended to all Nations four hundred and thirty Years before their Law by *Moses*; these were the wondrous Things of God's Law, which *David* knew to be conceal'd, and prayed to have a clear Sight of. The High-Priest with his Gifts and Sacrifices was the Mediator of that old ritualiz'd Covenant; and serv'd as a Figure and Parable (till the Time of Reformation) of the Mediator of the new and better; and the Offerings and Sacrifices of the former, which took away only ceremonial Impurities, the purifying of the *Flesh*, were a Figure of the Sins and Pollution of Conscience, which could only by any possibility be removed from any Sinner by the Blood of the Mediator of the second; purifying and propitiating every Guilt pertaining to Conscience. In short, the whole of that Law was a School-master to bring them to *Christ*, who was the real End and true Construction of it. The *Jews* first and second Covenant respected *Moses*, and the *Messiah*; whilst the first and second Covenant with the human Race, had respect to the first and second Adam, *Christ*. The Reward of their first Covenant, or School-master, being confined to literal Canaan, was temporal Felicity, as well to every private Person, as to the publick, and without any Failure, as often as either of them kept up to the Righteousness of duly ob-

CHAP. VIII. serving the Ceremonies thereof; in which Sense the Observation of the Psalmist held exactly true, *that he never saw the Righteous forsaken, nor their Seed begging their Bread.* With respect to the other Covenant and its Rewards, they were *Strangers* and Pilgrims of promiscuous Fortune.

IN order to take our Nature upon him, he despised not to receive his mysterious Birth into this World from a Woman *only*; that as from a Woman was the Beginning of our Sin and Misery, so from a Woman might be the Beginning of our Restitution to Life and Happiness eternal. And who can question the Power of God, which is bounded by nothing but what is impossible, or unfit to be done, being able to unite the Divine and Human Nature into *one Christ* or *Mediator*, equally consisting of both? Which reduces the Credibility of it, with respect to internal Evidence, to the same Certainty with that of the Creation, which the Reason of Man cannot deny.

IF therefore Reason allows God a Power of creating out of *nothing*; and so many Absurdities overtake the contrary Supposition, that there is no Pretence for disbelieving, but a Necessity of believing it: Why not allow, that God can make a *new Thing*, a second *Adam*, out of TWO SOMETHINGS; for the Redemption of Mankind, who had destroyed themselves, after he had created them? Accordingly in *Luke i. 35.* the Son of God, who was therefore perfect God, taking our Nature from the *Virgin's Womb*, and united by Birth to the Son of Man, to be perfect Man also, is called *the Son of the HIGHEST*; *the Power of the Highest shall over shadow thee;*
nothing

nothing of that Sort is impossible *with God*, ver. 37. CHAP. VIII. And Christ is elsewhere called the *Power*, as well as the *Wisdom of God* unto Salvation, *1 Cor. i. 24.*

IT was necessary that he should be born in this extraordinary Way, that his Human Nature might be in the same upright untainted State with that of the *first Adam*, as he came out of his Maker's Hands, and so by his exemplary unerring Obedience therein, vindicate the Righteousness and the Practicableness of that moral Law given unto Man, so exactly suited to his Nature and the Relation between God and Man; and so be free from any the least Sin of his own, when he offer'd up his Life for the Sins of the repenting World.

WHEN the *Almighty* undertakes to make *one* Person out of *two* Natures, shall vain Philosophy dispute and pretend a Difficulty how these Things can be? Especially when the two intelligent Agents, or Principles of Acting, consisting of Understanding, and Will, Divine, and Human, make *one* Person in the Sense of *Interposer pro hac vice*, (not an eternal Person) which Sort of Person the Mediator has taken up for a *Time*, to be laid down at the Consummation of all Things, when *God will, be all in all.* Has not God made Man the Center and Connection between the Angelical and animal World? And when the *reconciling all Things to Himself* requires his Power and Wisdom, shall there be wanting a *competent Medium*, consisting equally of his own *uncreated* Nature, and the *created* Nature of Man, true Son of God of a true Father; true Son of Man of a true Mother? More particularly, when there is

little or no Objection as to the Difficulty of the manner how, but what is soly'd in the Person of the Objector, who is himself a Medium of immaterial and material Natures: Let him reconcile the Difficulties of that Matter of Fact, the Union of Soul and Body; and then he will be able to give an Account to himself, of the Union of God and Man, in the Person of Christ.

THEY must be *minute* Philosophers indeed, who can suppose the Power of God in Aid of his own Will and Pleasure, incapable of effecting an Union of the Divine and Human Nature. For to ask them in their own Way, after the manner of Men, is it not much easier to unite two Somethings, how different soever in Substance and Essence, by a *Copula* they know nothing of, than to make a World (and perhaps innumerable many) out of *Nothing*? He is wonderful in his other Doings, why not in the Birth of him who is call'd wonderful? "The Souls of Men, says *Simplicius* "on *Epiſt.* cap. 1. are so contriv'd, as to link "together into one Person, an Heavenly and "Earthly Nature." Who then can suggest a Defect in Divine Power for uniting into one Person the Divine and Human Nature? *Convenerunt simul sempiterna Divinitas & temporalis Humanitas, & eo tenore facta est utriusque naturæ Unitas*, says *Cyprian*. When the Power and the Spirit of the *Highest* interposes, how easy is it for the express Image of the Father to unite the made Image of God, made by the *Word* of God, to himself; in order to restore the *lost* Resemblance to its primitive Attitude and Aspect, to Truth and Virtue, and to the Love of both, in the Understanding, Will, and Affections? They must be Strangers to true Reasoning in Philosophy, who don't

don't perceive it consonant and requisite to the Scale of Beings, that the Chasm between *Creator* and *Creature*, *infinite* and *finite*, should so be fill'd up by *that* Union of one to the other, in Christ.

THIS then is the only true, secure Philosophy of Heaven and Earth, for exhibiting the truest, the perfectest, and most complete Mediator between God and Man. And all Opinions derogatory from either the Divine or Human Nature, which together are essentially necessary to constitute him *this* Mediator, are corruptive of the Fundamental Faith in Christ, and eat like a Gangrene into this vital Principle of Christianity; and are the more likely to be *vain* for two Reasons: 1. Because all Falshood and vain Philosophy arises either from Mens joining those Notions or Ideas of Things, which God and the Reason of Things have divided, and made to disagree; or else *dividing* those Notions and Ideas which he has actually join'd and made to agree, for the Service of Men, and for the Manifestation of his own Wisdom and Power, Justice and Goodness. 2. Because the plain Notion that arises out of this, is exactly consonant to what the Holy Scriptures would plainly inculcate upon us. And the endear'd Excellency that adorns it, is, That it falls into the Apprehension of the Bulk of Christians of ordinary Capacity; for whose Sake the Religion of *Jesus* came down from Heaven for the saving of Souls; and may be said to be *bid from the wise and prudent*, (who always darken the Matter the more they dispute about it) *whilst it is reveal'd unto Babes*.

FOR they as clearly and universally perceive from the Phrase *Son of God*, his only begotten Son,

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That he as truly and equally partakes of the Divine Nature, as by the Phrase *Son of Man*, that he has truly assum'd our human Nature, and is equally interested in both of them. It is certain no other Sense of it came down from Heaven, or was written for our Learning, but that which concerns our Obedience, and the directest Way of bringing us thither, through the Mediator, who is the *Way*, the *Truth*, and the *Life*. And, because this Doctrine is design'd for common Edification and Salvation, the Glory of its Sacredness and Soundness, its Plainness and Usefulness consists in being adapted to general Apprehension, as the Foundation of Christianity, for the best Religion and Benefit of the World: Which supercedes the nice Skill, and subtle Distinctions of learned Schemes, and frees the Mind from the Mazes of invented Hypotheses.

SUCH Ideas of the Son of God, and Son of Man, united into our Mediator, the Redeemer, and Intercessor, the Saviour, and Judge of the World, are adequate to the religious Affair that belongs to us, and takes in all the affecting, influencing, and concerning Thoughts of that glorious Dispensation; whilst abstract Thoughts and Ideas fly off *in infinitum*, nor is any Pains hardly able to condense them into Use and Service, whilst we sojourn in a Tabernacle of Flesh. There is a *ne plus ultra* in every Vegetable, in every Animal, in every Element, after we have deduced the Knowledge of their Uses, and Properties relative to us; and is not their Use, *their Nature*, with respect to us? If, when we scrutinize further, we hardly guess aright at Things upon Earth, how shall our searching here ever discover any thing farther of the Nature of the Things that are in Heaven?

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Heaven? Their Use and Design is known to our digesting Reason, and, keeping strictly to the same (which is all that concerns it) is very easy of Digestion, and very foodful to the eternal Life we wish for there. But if we will refuse our Victuals till we are thoroughly acquainted with the Manner how it digests and turns to Nourishment, we deserve to starve. *Thine own things, and such as are grown up with thee, canst thou not know; how should thy Vessel then be able to comprehend the Way of the Highest?*

It is very injurious therefore, for any to assert, that the Notion of the Mediator of Christians was taken up, by Way of *Accommodation* to the Heathen Mediators, in order to reconcile them the sooner to that Profession. Does Truth accommodate itself to Error? Is not Truth *mensura recti, & obliqui*? If there was no true Mediator, how could there be any false ones? Falsehood, Ignorance, Folly, and Vice must first be removed, before Truth, Knowledge, Wisdom, or Duty can be planted in their Room. The Heathen Nations in Tract of Time, as before observed, having lost the original traditional Promise of the true Mediator, corrupted it with foolish Imaginations without End, and with Inventions ridiculous beyond Measure. The wisest of them, the *Platonists*, and *Pythagoreans* held a Mediation between God and mortal Man as a Principle of Religion; because the Meanness of Man was unworthy to have Access, and approach the high, lofty, transcendent, pure Deity; therefore erected *Demons* of a middle, ministerial Nature; and their Belief was, that God had left the Government and Administration of the World to them; and their Faith and Tenet was, "*That God does*"
"not

CHAP. "not mix or mingle with Men (or take human Na-
 VIII. "ture upon him) but all the Intercourse and Com-
 "munication between the Gods and Men is by the
 "Means and Mediation of Dæmons*." Though
 Homer had more truly observed in his *Odys.* long
 before that it was not unworthy the Gods, supe-
 rior to Dæmons, to descend upon Earth and con-
 verse with Men for their Information and Ser-
 vice †.

IN Consequence of which, the Worship of
 God was turn'd into, and swallowed up with
 Idolatry; the Worship of *Devils* instead of him-
 self, or their Dependence upon them, in lieu of
 the true Mediator to introduce them to God. It
 was accordingly the leading Design of Christia-
 nity, when addressed to them, to *destroy these*

* Θέοι ἀνθρώπων, ἢ μύηται, ἀλλὰ, διὰ Δαιμονίων
 παύσα' ἤν ὁμιλία καὶ ἡ διδασκαλία. Plato
 Symp.

† The oldest Notion of the Gods of the Heathen presented
 to us by an Heathen Writer, is that of *Hermes*, their first
 great Philosopher, who was himself older than many of their
 Gods. The Sum of the profound Secret was, "That there
 "were Gods of several Sorts; that the Celestial Gods were
 "made by the Supreme God and Father of all; but that
 "there was another Sort of God's dwelling in Temples here
 "below, and that these were made by Men, who after they
 "had form'd the Statues, and were not able to make Souls
 "to them, by mystick Rites, and powerful Charms, they
 "brought down the Souls of Dæmons or Angels, into those
 "dead Idols to animate and inhabit them; and that from
 "that time they had a Divine Power, a Power of doing Good
 "or Hurt to Men." *Hermes Trism.* L. de Nat. Deor. *Apuleio*
Interprete. It is well known that Egypt, the Country of this
Hermes, was the fertile Nursery of New Gods, and the School
 to which all Parts of the World went, to learn Arts and Sci-
 ences, and among the rest the wicked Craft of *Idolatry* in its
 several Mysteries and Fallacies; and if the first Masters were
 the greatest Fanatics in Idolatry, what must the Scholar,
 the rest of the World be?

Works

CHAP. *Works of the Devil*, and totally abolish Idolatry, CHAP.
 VIII. and the consequent Corruption of Morals, ow-
 VIII. ning to these false Mediators; before the Belief
 and Efficacy, the true Worship of God, and Re-
 formation of Manners from the Reception of the
one true Mediator could possibly take Place.

ALL the Rabble of false Mediators, who by
 Nature were no Gods, who had no *Appointment*,
 no manner of *Capacity*, but what the blind in-
 fatuated Worshippers bestowed upon them; were
 first to be dispossest out of the awaken'd Reason
 of Men, before a Foundation could be laid of
 the Belief of the *one, all-sufficient*, absolutely com-
 plete Mediation of Christ. Who, being *adequate*
 to the Office from the Capacity of *both* his Na-
 tures, and therefore *expressly appointed* from Hea-
 ven, was adequate to the Thoughts of their best
 Reason; to the Banishment of all past, and Pre-
 vention of all future Absurdity.

THE supreme Governor of the World, who
 lays his Commands of Belief in, and gives his
 Assurances of Mercy from the certain Nature and
 Fitness of Things, could no more have *appointed*
 or received to the Office any one of the Mediators
 their foolish Hearts recommended to him, than
 he could command the Sun to give Darkness, or
 Snow and Ice to administer Heat to the World.
 But in *appointing* Him alone to that most important
 Office in the World, who is both the Son of his,
 and the Son of Man's Nature, his Commands
 and Assurances execute themselves in the several
 Branches of that Office, to the greatest good of
 Man, and to the greatest Illustration of the Ho-
 nour and Attributes of the Divine Majesty; where-
 ever they meet with the common Justice of serious
 Attention

CHAP. Attention and Consideration on Man's Part, as
VIII. will afterwards appear.

OUR Author is excessively abusive, as well as ludicrous, in drawing a Parallel, *pag.* 73, 74, 75. between the Mediators of Heathens, and the Mediation of Christ; making the last rather more absurd than the other. The manifest and most pernicious Intention is, to impress upon his Readers, that there is as little, rather less Grounds for the Belief of one, than of the other; and so strike it out of Christianity, and cashier it from all Acceptation. And, *pag.* 113, 114. he explodes it as one of the *absurd Positives* of Christianity, and makes God *arbitrary* in requiring it.

BUT how absurd is his Proceeding? How gross are his Misrepresentations and canting Delusions, in dealing that out for *Christianity*, which is professedly and notoriously but a Part of it? Throwing that aside as contemptible, or unwholesome, which is the very declared Foundation, the boasted Glory, the distinguishing Essence, the saving Health and Salvation of it. How like a Quack does he appear in his *Title Page*; where he mounts the Stage, and, with the *Assurance* and *Sufficiency*, mixt with the *Artifice* peculiar to such Persons, prescribes that for the Cure and Medicine of Christianity, which is known to all regular Practitioners, not to be the *curative* Part of it; not to be the Means, not to be the Motives, not to be the Aids, not to be the Helps and Instruments of it?

FOR the Religion of the End, or the Law of Nature being first set to rights and restor'd to its Perfection, the entire *Cure*, the noble *Medicine* for

for restoring and enabling the *sick, impotent* Nature of Men, to perform and do it, with Satisfaction to themselves, and Acceptance with God (finding in themselves, without that gracious Proffer, neither sufficient Inclination nor Ability for it) consists in the *Means*; and in the Head of all the Means *Christ Jesus*, the *Mediator* between God and Man; what He has done; what He does; and what He is to do, as our *Redeemer*, *Intercessor*, and *Judge*.

WHO can believe him, when he tells them to their Faces, that the healing Medicine, (so all the rest of the World call it) is older, and was sooner known than the Disease? He might as well have given out, that *Hippocrates* was as old as the Distempers of Men. Whereas the previous Diseases of the World, *first* made him that great Physician he is recorded to be. And, indeed, it looks as if the Art of healing *bodily* Disorders was the *Gift* of God; being given all *at once*, at least at *one time* of the World; seeing none in so long a Duration pretend to equal him: But all, perhaps to the End of the World, contend, and will contend who shall imitate him nearest in that way. He lived some time before our Saviour; and though his Divine Art is a great *Blessing* and *Benefit* to the World, yet we find it is far from being *universal*, no more than the Gospel. Therefore no more Ground for impeaching the Providence of God in one Case, than in the other. And if there are, and have been more Quacks and Pretenders in that Skill, all the World over, than there are, or have been, counterfeit Revelations from Heaven; there is less Reason for invalidating the *true* Revelation upon that Account, or disrespecting (with our Author) the *Great Physician of Souls*;
* who

CHAP. VIII. who had never been known to the World, if Human Nature, in its moral Part, had not been diseased and disordered by the Fall, which was not as old, but *after* the CREATION, from doing its Duty. And surely, he is the greatest and truest Physician of *Men*, who by Profession cures both Body and Mind; the Body being likewise cured at the final Resurrection to Life, when all other Cures are desperate and impossible?

HE might as consistently have asserted, that the *Act of Parliament* for discouraging Prophaneness and Immorality, is as *old* as Prophaneness and Immorality. But though the Christian Law is not so old as the Creation, nor the Disobedience of those that occasion'd it; it will be found under the *Offices* of our Mediator to be the most quickening, powerful, vital Law that could be devised by God, or Man, consistent with Man's Liberty of Will; not only for discouraging Prophaneness and Immorality, but for encouraging the sincere Practice of Piety, and all Virtue, which is more than human Laws can pretend to.

As our Author set out, so he has blunder'd through innumerable Inconsistencies, apparent to those who are attentive; and to those that are not so (the greatest Part of Readers) he plies the Art of juggling, and Skill of shifting ambiguous Words, in the Shift he makes to pervert them; *Christianity*; *Immutability* of the Relation between God and Man; *Sufficiency of Reason*; *Honour of God*, and *Good of Men*; *Mediation*; *Positives*; the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, with the *Airs of Wit* and *Pleasantry*, the better to impose upon superficial unguarded Readers; till he comes to his last

last concluding Words, *Errare possum, Hæreticus esse nolo.* A pert Irony, laughing in his Sleeve at those he has carried on so far! CHAP. VIII.

FOR, if ever there was a *Hæretick* in *Christianity*, he has the Resemblance of such a one. If any one has ever been an *Apostate*, not holding the Head, *Jesus Christ*, the Mediator of Worship*; or rejected the only *Foundation* of Faith that can be laid † of a Christian's Title to eternal Life, it is He. If there is such a Thing as *damnable Heresy*, or *denying the Lord that bought them*, according to *St. Peter*, 2 *Ep.* ii. 1. so entirely subversive of the Christian Faith, that it cannot possibly be the Christian Faith, in such a Heresy or Departure from it, *He* is the guilty Person. *Antichrist* himself may as well excuse himself from being a *Hæretick*, or set himself up to be a true Christian, as such a Writer upon Christianity. According to 1 *John* xi. 22. *He is Antichrist, who denieth the Father and the Son, i. e.* God in Christ reconciling the World to himself by the Death of his Son; or his being the *Father* and Saviour of the World, by the Mediation of his Son sent into the World, for the Salvation and Redemption of it; and whoever denies the Son as sent from the Father for that Purpose, denies the *Father* as well as the *Son*; nor does any come to the Father, as Father, but by the Son; nor is the Father glorified as Father, but by the Son. If any has been *subverted and sinneth, being condemned of himself* ‡; or thought themselves *unworthy of everlasting Life* §; Christian Charity itself can hardly forbear suspecting, that it is *He*.

* *Col.* ii. 18, 19. † 1 *Cor.* iii. 11. ‡ *Tit.* iii. 11.
§ *Act.* xiii. 46.

Because

CHAP. Because he falters so very much, and is guilty
VIII. of so many Contradictions, a bad Sign of being
self-condemned.

IN Words he owns Christ, but makes no more use of him, than as a *Republiſher* of the Law of Nature, and an Example of its Practice; which is the ſame Thing in effect, and to the grand Intention of the Goſpel, as to diſown him: he, with a careleſs Air, denies not his Miſſion from God for the former Purpoſe; but particularly takes the utmoſt Pains to deny and villify the *End*, the *chief Purpoſe* of his Miſſion, and all the Duties reſulting from it. He declares *, “ I dare not ſay, there is the leaſt Difference “ between the *Law of Nature* and the *Goſpel*; for “ that would ſuppoſe ſome Defect in one of them, “ and reflect upon the Author of both.” And almoſt every where, he receives the Chriſtian Revelation *in part*, and as a *Revelation*, and calls it the *Republication* of his Law of Nature; he acknowledges the *Goodneſs*, the *Wiſdom* of God, that *that* Part was needful; he ſubmits alſo to the *Authority* of God, that *that* was worthy commanding, and *ought* to be obey’d. But as to thoſe Parts, wherein *God*, and *Chriſt*, and his *Apoſtles*, place the Love and Goodneſs, the Wiſdom, Power, and Authority of God and Chriſt, and the Riches, the Glory, and the Pre-eminence of the Goſpel; all theſe he rejects, together with all the *peculiar* Obligations laid upon Chriſtians beyond natural Religion. And by rejecting, ſhamefully contradicts himſelf, and ſeems to violate his own Conſcience.

* Page 342.

FOR

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FOR could his Conſcience, little inform’d as it was, ever deny, that if there is Truth in one Part of the Revelation, there muſt be alſo in the other; it muſt be *wholly* true, as a Revelation, or not at all ſo. If there is Wiſdom, and Authority, Love and Mercy in one Part, he was bound to believe there was likewiſe the ſame in the other. Seeing the ſame Truth, the ſame Wiſdom, the ſame Authority and Goodneſs that communicated one, communicated the other. And as they required the one, as the Religion of the End, ſo did they the other, as the beſt Religion of the Means for performing that End. Who gave him the Liberty of picking and chuſing, that he rejects in the Lump, and diſcards half at once, nay, I might ſay, the whole Goſpel?

A *Tully’s Office* put out by him, with Amendments and Improvements from the Chriſtian Morality, would have ſerv’d all his Ends and Purpoſes of the Bible. Was it his own wiſe Reaſon that ſet him upon ſuch unequal Dealing with the Scripture? But that is plainly telling the courteous Reader that he is wiſer than God; or elſe he muſt be very dull of Apprehenſion, if he does not perceive that to be his Meaning. Or, was it his own Authority, being by Profeſſion a *Civilian*, that inſtigated him thus to the repealing the Law of Chriſt? But, he ought to have conſidered the Nature of *Obligation* better, in that Caſe; that the Repeal muſt derive from as high Authority as that which firſt made the Law; and it is to be hoped that even our Author’s Diſciples are, or ought to be of Opinion, that his Authority in *reſcinding* is not
VOL. I. R quite

CHAP. VIII. quite so great as God's for establishing, or that it indispensably requires his Consent and Concurrence for establishing the Jurisdiction of his Maker; notwithstanding he has so often taken upon him to condemn as *needless, useless, absurd, and arbitrary*, what God in Christ has been pleas'd very positively to enjoin his erring and straying Creatures, for their Good, as well as for his own Honour and Glory.



CHAP.

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CHAP. IX.

The OFFICES of the MEDIATOR.

THE Foundation being laid in *Nature*, in the preceding *Chapter*, I proceed to the Offices of our Mediator, which could have been of no Use or Satisfaction either to God or Man, if he had not been in the proper *Capacity* with respect to both. Now the Business or Function of a Mediator being to reconcile both the Parties at difference, each to the other, must consist in these Particulars.

1. That the Proposal or Proposition for a Reconciliation should be an acceptable and desirable Thing, as soon as known, to both Parties at variance. With respect to God; He made the Stoop, and condescended to take the first Step. The Scheme was laid and approved between him and his only begotten Son, *the Lamb slain by determin'd Counsel, from the Foundation of the World*: In order to shew his sole Power and Prerogative of bringing the greatest Good out of Man's Evil; and to display before all intelligent Creatures, the infinite Riches and Exuberance of his Goodness, in a new Scene, beyond any thing observable in the Creation of the World. God had been but half known, the better half had been unknown, had not the

R 2

Fall

CHAP. Fall made the glorious Display, and the joyful
IX. Discovery.

THAT Display of his Goodness, called *Mercy*, had never been known to Man, or Angel, if the Object of it, the *Fall of Man*, had not presented; that Mercy and Pity in shewing whereof he chiefly shews his Almighty Power, had been unshewn. And it is in reality a greater Instance of Goodness, to place such a mutable Creature as Man, in a *Capacity* of retrieving himself from Misery to *more exalted* Happiness, (as is the Case of the Method of Redemption) than first to place him in a Capacity of continuing himself in an *inferior* Happiness, as was that of Paradise.

FOR the Covenant of Obedience there, was established upon the Sanction of Death, and its *Relative*, Continuance of *Life in Paradise, Terrestrial* Heaven; but there was no *Promise* made, no manner of *Right* given to *eternal Life* in *Heaven* above, or *Celestial* Heaven. Therefore St. Paul speaking of the manifold Advantages of the *second* Covenant above the first, brings in for one Instance, *The Wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God* [free from any Claim, Right, or Merit on Man's Part] *is eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord*, Rom. vi. 23. Paradise is not the Heaven, where the Souls of just Men made perfect [by a Re-union to their Resurrection-Body] is to be glorified in, but an *intermediate* State of Happiness for the Soul after Death, inferior to Heaven; to which our Saviour himself pass'd, before he went for good and all to the Right-Hand of God. And therefore it was, That God so loved the World that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should

*

not

not perish, but *have everlasting Life*, John iii. 16. CHAP.
By the new Covenant we were adopted, as one IX.
of the Ancients expresses it, *εις καινότητα αιδής ζωής*, to the *Newness* of eternal Life, as a *new Thing*.

WITH respect to Man; the Acceptableness and Desirableness of such an Overture, was to be laid before his Reason for his Approbation and Consent, reflecting upon his own great Need of it, the Accusations of his own Conscience in offending God, and its just Fears of his Displeasure: That he is become *alienated, an Enemy to him in his own Mind by his own wicked Works*, Col. i. 21. That he is an Apostate from his Duty, and if he had a Mind to be otherwise, he finds those Difficulties and Discouragements from the conscious Pravity of his Nature, that he cannot exactly perform the Law of his Nature. And reflecting again upon the Terms of this Proposal, its Deliverance, its Promises, its Advantages every Way, he must be lost to the intended Use of Reason, if he closes not with it.

2. THE Disposition to be reconciled after such a Proposal must be *reciprocal* in both Parties. God's Disposition to Peace, and Propitiation, is sufficiently conspicuous, by first sending his Son, and then to prove his *actual* Reconcilement upon Terms easy to Man's Performance; gave the greatest Demonstration of it the World could possibly receive, by requiring *his* Obedience unto Death in *our* Nature and Stead; a *Propitiation* so valuable, and so awful, that it ought not to fail of making them infallibly certain, that he had no more Displeasure against them; and being ascertain'd of that, the more afraid to offend him.

R 3

Man's

CHAP. IX. Man's *Disposition* is still to be cultivated, intreated, and beseeched in Christ's stead, by the *Ministers* of his Word, to the Consummation of all Things.

3. THE State, Condition, and Circumstances of both Parties, must be consider'd; what is fit, right, and meet for each to do; God, as well as Man, in order to an Accommodation.

4. AN actual Negotiation of the Matter between both Parties in an impartial Manner.

5. THE proper Manner and Method that each is to be dealt with; considering Man as a *free*, intelligent Agent; and God as a *Governor*.

THERE was two Parts then incumbent upon our Mediator. The *first* was, for reconciling Man to God: In order to which, he came down from Heaven a *Plenipotentiary* from GOD, and began that Part upon Earth in his *Prophetick* Office, and carries it on in Heaven, as *Advocate*, *King*, *Judge*: and in that Prospect he is call'd *the Light of the World, the Way, the Truth, Master, Lord, &c.* The *second* Part, viz. his *Priestly* Office, was to atone, make Peace with, or, which is the very same Thing in other Words, reconcile God to Man; to that Purpose he is stiled *the Lamb of God, a Priest for ever, after the Order of Melchisedeck, a Propitiation, the Life of the World, &c.* And that was accomplished on Earth, in the Sacrifice of himself, and ever since carried on in Heaven, by way of Memorial there and Intercession for us; where he sits at the Right-Hand of God, a *Plenipotentiary*, or *complete* Mediator, between God and Man, for effecting a thorough

a thorough Reconciliation and mutual Friendship between both. CHAP. IX.

THE first Task upon our Mediator was to *reconcile Man to God*; in order to which he came down from Heaven a *Plenipotentiary* from God, that *Emanuel*, God with us, to begin the Negotiation with Man. And therefore it is said, it pleased the Father that in him *ALL Fulness should dwell*, and the *Fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him BODILY*: Which was, when his only begotten Son descended from the Bosom of his Father, and assumed our Nature, and Body, being Son of Man, as he was before Son of God, *all Fulness, i. e.* of Divine, as well as Human Nature dwelt in him. And as *God* was compleat and full in him, so *we* are said to be *compleat in him*. And this Idea of a Mediator fills and compleats the Sense of Scripture, and brings in Harmony to all the Parts.

WHEN God and Man become united in one Person, what can be a more auspicious Sign of a future Reconciliation to his straying Creature Man? Or a more intimate Token of Friendship? And through that *Vinculum dei & hominis*, having Fellowship with the Son of Man united to the Son of God, we are said to have *Fellowship with the Father, to be one with God, and God with us*: And being thus united in *natural* Brotherhood to him, who is Son of God by *Nature*, we have a Security from *Nature*, (transcending the Relation of common Creatures to their Creator) as well as from Adoption, of that surpassing Love, Privilege, and Intimacy of being called the *Sons of God*; who is our *Father* in Christ by *Relation*, as well as Adoption; and *that Christian* Idea of the

CHAP. IX. FATHER is the highest, the most comprehensive Idea of Father that can be exhibited. And if the covenanted Relation to God is thus firmly grounded upon the *natural* Relation, how unnatural, and unkind to themselves are the Rejectors of Christianity? And when we cultivate the *Spirit of Christ* shed upon baptized Christians abundantly, we are doubly *one with Christ*, in *Flesh*, and in *Spirit*: And through him *related*, as well as *adopted Sons of God*, *Heirs*, and *Joint-Heirs with Christ*. It being previously necessary, as is known to all the World, that all Adoption must be founded in *Sameness* of Nature; but to qualify us for that, we are first to be *translated out of the Kingdom of Darkness, into the Kingdom of his dear Son*. The *Understandings* of Men by Nature *were darken'd, being alienated from the Life of God, through the Ignorance that is in them, because of the Blindness of their Hearts*, *Eph. iv. 2.*

By his Son's teaching us the whole Will of God, was fulfill'd, his being the *Angel or Messenger* of the *Covenant*, the *prime Apostle of our Profession*, in those *last Days*, when *God spake to us by his Son*, as that *PROPHET*, importing Teacher as well as Foreteller, who was to come into the World, and that *Christ*, who, when he came, was to *teach all Things*. He was foretold to be a *Prophet* like unto *Moses*; a *King* like *David*, sitting upon the *Throne of Israel*; and a *Priest* after the Order of *Melchisedeck*. For as soon as God proffer'd the Readiness of his Disposition to be reconciled, and the Bowels of his Mercy to shew wonted Favour, in the Profusion of his Offers; it was necessary in all Decorum, that the *inferior Party*, Man, a Fugitive from God and Duty, should stop, and turn about, especially when overtaken by God; and

and hearken what he had to say to him, and immediately, set about what he bid him do, to cease his Enmity, and be reconciled to him, and his own Happiness: Without which, it was impossible that the Holy God either could, or would be sooner, or any farther reconciled to him. For Repentance must go before Prayer; and if the Prodigal Son had not begun to return, the Father had not gone out to have met him.

AND because the Original Image of God was composed of perfect Knowledge of *Good* and *Duty*, through manifold Sins and Iniquities Man had lost the Light of the Path he should walk in, and almost the Sight of the Good he should pursue; and by the Perverseness of their Ways (both *Jews* and *Gentiles*) had wilfully corrupted the Rule of Duty, and brought it down to the Measures and Inclinations of their own wretched Obedience; it was previously necessary for the heavenly Instructor to give them both an *entire* Rule of the whole Duty of Man, that *the new Man might be renewed in Knowledge, after the Image of him that created him*, *Col. iii. 10.* and, according to the tenor of the new Covenant, for the better putting the Law into the Mind, and writing it upon the Heart, that they might the better afterwards know the Number, and Heinousness of Transgressions, and endeavour to mend for the Time to come. Knowledge of Sin must go before perfect Repentance; and Knowledge of the Religion of the End, and of the Means, must likewise precede the due Observance of either of them.

Mr. LOCK very well observes*, "That natural Religion in its full Extent, was no where

* *Reasonableness* of Christian. page 265, 266.

" as

CHAP. IX. "as he knew of, taken Care of by the Force of natural Reason; that it is too hard a Thing for unassisted Reason, to establish Morality in all its Parts upon its Foundations, with a clear and convincing Light: And it is at least a surer and shorter Way, to the Apprehensions of the Vulgar, and Mass of Mankind, that one manifestly sent from God, and coming with visible Authority from him, should, as a King and Law-maker, tell them their Duties; and require their Obedience; than leave it to the long, and sometimes intricate Deductions of Reason, to be made out to them: Which the greatest Part of Mankind have neither Leisure to weigh, nor through Want of Education, Use and Skill to judge of. We see how unsuccessful in this, the Attempts of Philosophers were before our Saviour's Time. How short their several Systems came of the Perfection of a true and complete Morality is very visible."

WHILST on Earth he had many Things to communicate to his Apostles, which they were not able to bear, and therefore after his Ascension, sent the *Holy Ghost* to inspire them with whatever was, or could be occasionally wanting to the End of the World, and bring all Things to their Remembrance, of his Life, and Doctrine; and commit it to Writing, as the unchangeable Standard of Truth, and Charter of Salvation, to all Ages, and Nations, where it shall appear.

THEREIN is a complete Rule of Life and Manners, and a Treasure of the Knowledge of God, and Ourselves, as far as is necessary in this Life; without the least Affectation of those Arts of disputing, *pro* and *con*, upon every Subject, fo

so highly admired among the *Greeks* for *Wisdom*; CHAP. IX. careful not to amuse, but convince the Reason, rectify the Will, and raise the Affections by the native Majesty and Simplicity of Truth; a Simplicity of pure greatness of matters inexpressibly noble, and worthy of its Author, therefore you find a chaste contempt of meretricious Ornaments, and a designed Negligence as to systematical or declamatory *Method*, artificial Eloquence, embroider'd Periods, varnish'd Expressions, *enticing Words of Mens Wisdom*, wherewith the Sophists and Rhetoricians universally studied to illuminate and embellish their, for the most Part, vain-glorious Composures about uncertain, trivial, controverted Things. Though that Observation is always true, *simplex & nuda veritas est luculentior; quia satis ornata per se, &c. adeoque ornamentis extrinsecus additis fucata corrumpitur: mendacium vero specie placet aliena*, *Lact.* But the beauty and sublime of Holy Scripture arising from *Things*, not from Words, from the negotiation, importance, and majesty of the *Things* it discovers, passing by such mean address of *human* assistance, in addressing to Men, thereby engaged and secured the thing intended, *viz.* the perusal of the *Whole*; that the heavenly Doctrine might be *insensibly* imbib'd; and every Man's Reason make the better construction, by the Rule of *Proportion*, *comparing spiritual Things with spiritual*, of any, together with every Part of the whole*.

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* And this *Divine Method* for reading the *whole*, wrote at sundry Times, and on divers Occasions for making wise unto Salvation, includes the Occasions of all Men; whilst it points out those Parts to be most studied and applied, which address themselves to every one's respective Wants: That whether

WHILST it left human eloquence, which naturally arises from the warmth of affections truly touch'd with such affecting Subjects, to kindle at the most *beautiful inspired* * Simplicity in relating matters

ther severally or jointly there is any Error in the Understanding; any Mis-rule in the Affections and Appetites; any Perverseness, or Disobedience in the Will, with respect to the Religion of the End, or the Means, the Man may be *instructed, corrected, &c.* and *thoroughly furnished* to all good Works. But the Majesty and Usefulness, the Seriousness and Importance of those Directions to Sinners, and Penitents, as we all are, or should be, would be impaired and disrespected, if the Holy Page, and Chapter, Gospels and Epistles were taken up with those *little* things of Human Art, harmonious Sentences, laboured Exactness, quaint Transitions, Periods measured, weighed out in Antitheses, and rounded at proper Distances. But it is the Glory and the Wisdom of those Writings to be clear of false Eloquence, the tinkling Style of swelling Words of Vanity; their Power consists in the Plainness of Words with easy Figures, enrich'd with the noblest and sublime of all Subjects in the World, which makes Divine Eloquence; the Truth of Things adorns them with the true Sublime, and the Importance of what is said sufficiently embellishes the Words, and smooths the Soul: That makes them so successful in convincing the Wisest, as well as instructing the weakest Understanding; infinitely preferable to your false affected Eloquence, which takes care to supply the Want of Sense and Subject with Decorations of alluring Words accurately placed and methodized for filling the Ear, and delighting the Imagination. But what is there in all the Treasures of the Eloquence of *Greece or Rome*? The Effect must be like the Cause—Grief, Anger, Hatred, Love, raised for *worldly* Things, and moving well in Words, raises and moves the like Passions for the like Objects, by an artificial and mechanical Process. But nothing can move and affect the Heart, but the Heart, and what is a *discerner* of the Heart, the *Word of God*; which moves and penetrates like a *two edged Sword*; and by the Help of an incorruptable Seed, renews as it were with a new Principle, to a new Life, *Life Eternal*. This is above the Power, and out of the reach of mere Human Eloquence.

* This is an evident Proof that the Holy Scriptures relating to the World's Saviour, are the true Word and Work of God; not

matters of Fact; at the noble *καθημερία*, or *Intrinsick* CHAP. IX. *pidity* of Truth; at the adorable *Sublimity* of the most Divine Things in their wonderful habitude and respects to us; at the inspiring *Pathetick* of the Goodness and Mercy of God, in the Redemption of the World, and the Forbearance of Sinners. And when the fire is kindled, to speak with the tongue, and affect their Neighbours with the same; who, through thoughtlessness and worldly affairs, are little affected with it; and sometimes become the Pen of a ready writer, for that purpose. And *how blessed is the Man that reasoneth of Holy Things by his Understanding?* *Eclus.* xiv. 20.

not dictated by the Spirit and Wisdom of Man, but really inspired and plainly derived from the Holy Spirit, the Wisdom from above: Like the rest of the Works of God, plain and simple to the View, they present their Sublimity and the Characters of their Divinity, to the Understanding of Man, by having all that is *best* and *great*, and being free from the Mixture of every Thing that does not *belong* to, nor *become* the *Nature* of the Subject treated of. Is it not very observable, that all the *Evangelists* speak of the Crucifixion of our Lord in the simplicity of Facts and Circumstances without the least emotion, commiseration, reflection, or exclamation of sorrow on *his* Account? Because *weeping for him* after the fact was over, did not *belong* to the Subject, but to weep for themselves and their Sins, the true Occasion of it. Yet what one mere human, uninspired Author sitting down to write the History of his Friend laying down his Life for his sake, could contain from throwing in the pity of some such Expressions as these, for so good a Person, *That he deserved a better Fate!* &c. But as we find nothing of that, we may conclude of a Surety that the Finger of God was in the Writing, for the general good of Mankind. And that the Prophets writing so many Years before the Fact, should be affected with Sentiments of his Sufferings like Eye-Witnesses, and abound with the most tender and pathetick Expressions is more than natural, is plainly the Effect of supernatural Inspiration.

The Concurrence of the *Evangelists*, is a Testimony of their Veracity; and the Simplicity of Variation, a Proof of their no Combination.

So

So far is the Gospel from lessening or relaxing the moral Law of Nature, which was fallen into defuetude, and had lost its direction, through the corrupt doctrines, and vicious practices of *Jews* and *Gentiles*; that its profess'd design is to fulfil and establish, confirm and strengthen it; by clearing it of Error, improving the Sense, and extending the Obligations to the thoughts and inward parts, the principal Agent in morality. Our Lord *filled up* (as in the Original) and restor'd the true Meaning which was stolen away by the *Scribes*, and secreted by the *Pharisees*. Whatever the Light of Nature discovers to be true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good Report, if there be any Virtue, if there be any Praise, it obliges, *Phil.* iv. 8. to cultivate, and think of those Things.

AND as it would have all Degrees of Men to be saved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth, it comprehends all Sorts under its Obedience, from the highest to the lowest. It was a great Defect in the Philosophers, proceeding from a supercilious Contempt, accounting them *Prophane*, that they never adapted their moral Reasonings, or Instructions to the *Commonalty*, but to the Learned only; so that they, who most needed Instruction, went without it. But in the Gospel, according to Mr. *Lock's* Judgment, "All the Duties of Morality lie clear and plain, and easy to be understood. And here I appeal, whether this be not the surest, the safest, and most effectual Way of teaching; especially if we add this farther Consideration; that as it suits the lowest Capacities of reasonable Creatures, so it reaches and satisfies, nay, enlightens

"lightens the highest, and the most elevated CHAP. IX.
"Understandings cannot but submit to the Authority of this Doctrine as Divine *.

FOR the Gospel, moreover, refers the Obedience of every one, to the Authority of God commanding it; placing it to his Account as the Inspector and Rewarder. And this gives the controuling Advantage to Christianity beyond all the teaching of Philosophy, according to that of *Lactant.* *De falsa sapient.* cap. 26. *Nemo igitur credit; quia tam se hominem putat esse, qui audit; quam est ille, qui præcipit:* and it may be added, *non vox hominis sonat.* "Did the Saying of *Aristippus*, or *Consutius*, give it an Authority? "Was *Zeno* a Law-giver to Mankind? If not, what he or any other Philosopher deliver'd, was but a Saying of his, Mankind might hearken to it, or reject it, as they pleased." *Lock's Reasonablen. of Christian.* p. 269. "The Rules of Morality were in different Countries and Sects different. And natural Reason no where had, nor was like to cure the Defects and Errors in them," pag. 175. Always remembering, that for every wilful Disobedience, without Repentance, he will call us to a severe Account in the Life after this.

AND that every one might have the Test of the Sincerity and good Conscience of his own Obedience, and consequently of his Hopes and Fears hereafter, in the keeping of his own Breast, he is acquainted, that *whoever keepeth the whole Law, yet offendeth in one Point, is guilty of all;* James ii. 10. That if he has retrenched his In-

* *Reasonableness of Christian.* page 281.

CHAP.
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clination to all Sin, save one, and that one as dear as an *Eye*, or a *Right-hand*, it must be parted with. If he indulges himself in the Commission of any one known Sin, or Omission of a plain Duty, he cannot be a sincere Servant of God till he has Respect unto *all* his Commandments; because the Authority stamp'd upon all equally, is disobeyed in offending, with respect to any one of them; no one is allowed to pick and chuse Duty, and set up a Religion for themselves; but to take and observe, as they find it in his Holy Word prescribed, and required by God, the Author of their Lives, the Giver of their Faculties and all their Opportunities, and the Sovereign of their Conscience.

THE Virtue and Necessity of universal Obedience is obvious, not only because nothing else than the Avoidance of all known Sin, and Practice of all known Duty is, or ought to be called *true Virtue*; but because nothing less is a true *Qualification* (all and every the Commandments and Prohibitions being Directions for perfecting that Qualification) as well as for lessening the Fondness of Enjoying, and the Pain that otherwise would be present at the final Adieu we must one Day bid to all worldly Things, but above all for relishing and enjoying the Happiness of a future State. For as we are sociable Creatures, and Worshippers of God in this Life, so shall we be in the next: And therefore the previous Weaning the Love and Affections of the Soul, by Temperance in all Things, from what is not to be had in that State; and a Delight in the Sociable; and likewise in the Divine Virtues of loving, thanking, trusting, and depending upon God; or, in other Words, a *sober, righteous, and godly Life*, are all necessary

to

to go along with us. This explains that fine Expression of the *Roman* Orator, though to himself obscure, *est virtus nihil aliud quam in se perfecta, & ad summum perdueta natura* *.

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THIS makes it truly what it is, *Religion* from *Heaven*, and to *Heaven* in Prospect; awful, binding, and yet most comfortable; and gives it the Force and Power of the *Law of God* over all its Subjects; which is a sensible authoritative Obligation, vastly superior to the faint Obligations deducible from the Fitness of Things to the Good of the Whole, or the Relation of Persons, and Things, to one another; which are understood but by few. For that Reason our Author chose to derive his Religion from that Source, to confound the Reason, and weaken the settled Religion of as many as he could; as kind a Thing, as to send them to seek what, by much thinking, may be perceived by the Light of a *Lanthorn*, before that, which at the same Time, is actually discover'd by the Light of the *Sun*, at *Noon-day*. For it is the Glory of Christianity to give Light to them that sit in *Darkness*, and actually lose their Way whilst they boast of the Light of *Nature*. It enlightens the Understanding of all Degrees, and Ages of Mankind, as soon as they arrive at the Use of Reason; and improves and cultivates their rational Faculties in the most desirable of all Knowledge, the Things of Religion, the peculiar Things of its Province: By shewing God to us in a clear and more affecting Light of those Attributes and Perfections which relate to us as Creator, and Governor, Comptroller and Judge, Preserver and Lover of Men, than Phi-

* *Cic. de Leg. 1.*

CHAP. IX. *W*isdomy was able to recommend; and shewing us ourselves to ourselves, how continually we depend upon him, for what we are, for all we have received, and for all we hope for: Our minutest Affairs being at no Time beneath his Care, and our great concern in securing his Favour, by our own Care, always the Object of his particular Blessing and Assistance: it shews us from whence we are fallen; what is the Recovery, and what is the Exaltation of our Nature; how ignorant we are of ourselves wherein our Happiness consists; how it would redeem us from the Cheat we would, if let alone, put upon ourselves, from the forewarned Deceitfulness of Sin, and Love of Temptation, from wronging ourselves of our high Reward; and truly informs us how cold, and unconstant we are in that Pursuit.

No wonder Philosophers were divided and subdivided into endless Variety of Opinions, and all of them mistaken, about Man's Happiness; when the great Duration of his Being, in a *future State*, was left out of the Account; whilst the perfect Law of Liberty informs us, how far we must ever be from Happiness, as long as we go on in the wilful Custom of Sin. And what they were unhappily ignorant of, lamenting the Want of an *Instructor*, (being unable to reconcile their natural Notions of the Justice, and the Goodness of God to their guilty Minds) in *what Manner* we are to apply for the Peace of Conscience, and to be sure of obtaining Remission of Sins, the Favour of a reconciled God, and an acceptable Welcome, and a filial Freedom to worship, and endeavour to serve him better, as our heavenly Father, and best Friend.

I

AND,

AND, whilst we pretend not to throw off all Worship of him, nor the Thoughts of getting us Pardon for our Sins, it further acquaints us, what Opinions of Men God dislikes, and most resists in his gracious Methods of revealing himself for the speedier and more effectual Advancement of our Happiness. They are of two Sorts: one is *Hypocrisy*, the formal outside Religion, and that too in Conformity but to *some* Duties, like the *Pharisees*; for there are, and ever will be such in Christianity; against which, our Lord declares himself with particular Odium, and Condemnation, as being not only the Disappointment, but the utter Subversion of his Religion, after it is acknowledged, and where-ever it is received. The other is of those, who, out of a vain Self-flattering Conceit of the SUFFICIENCY of their own Reason, and Righteousness, (I wish it never was the Case of Deists) arrogantly imagine, they stand in no Need of Repentance; or, which is the same Thing, no revealed Methods from Heaven for carrying it on, no Redeemer to bring them to it, or offer them Health and Salvation. Against such righteous as these, such whole in *their own Conceit*, (however our Author has accumulated his Contempt by burlesquing it, *p. 41.*) our Lord declares, he came not to call *them* to Repentance, or offer himself a Physician; but only to such Sinners as were *sensible* of their Disease, and weary'd with the Burthen of their Sins: so sensible of their own Insufficiency and continual Dependance upon God, as to think his Providence both in Temporals, and Spirituall, to be more to them towards their prospering in either, than their own mere Endeavours.

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WHILST

WHILST the opposite Temper is precluded, because it precludes Instruction even from God himself, and resists the true Purposes of his Revelation, and will have none of his Ways; but, in their Turn, the poor Wretches will find the Fate of being resisted by him, with an Abasement meet for so much Pride and Contumacy; of all Frailties the least becoming human Nature, that should always live and breathe in the Dependance of a Creature on his Creator, and a Servant to his Lord; and the most miserable Case in any Patient for the Son of God himself to cure. It is really the only contemptible Disease in Man that is born of a Woman, as well as the most insensible of its dangerous Condition. The old Philosophers bore their Faculties with Modesty, and enjoy'd their Reason with Desires of improving it; but our modern Despisers, whilst they adorn and brighten their Reason by what they borrow from Revelation, ungratefully condemn its main Design upon them.

“ How short their several Systems [of Philosophers] came of the Perfection of a true and complete *Morality* is very visible. And if, since that the Christian Philosophers have much out-done them, yet we may observe, that the first Knowledge of the Truths they have added, are owing to Revelation: Though as soon as they are heard and consider'd, they are found to be agreeable to Reason; and such as can by no Means be contradicted. Every one may observe a great many Truths which he receives at first from others, and readily assents to, as consonant to Reason, which he would have found it hard, and, perhaps, beyond

“ yond his Strength to have discover'd himself. Native and original Truth is not so easily wrought out of the Mine, as we who have it deliver'd, ready dug and fashion'd, into our Hands, are apt to imagine.” *Locke's Reasonableness of Christian.* page 266. “ Many are beholden to Revelation, who don't acknowledge it,” page 278. If they make the Son of God an *Impostor*, they are guilty of the Sin against the *Holy Ghost*; and if they say, there was no need of his coming to be a Propitiation for our Sins, they make God a Lyar; and either Way they despise and perish.

As Man is a sociable Creature, Christianity improves *all the Human* Virtues; securing the good Order of Society, in every Member, upon the surest and most lasting Principles, of not only an honorary, but a *conscientious* publick Spirit, as doing their respective Duties to *God*, rather than unto Men.

THE publick Spirit and Love of Country, which so remarkably animated some Heathen Nations, was full of Injury to other Countries round about, and set them upon conquering and enslaving innocent Neighbours, who design'd them no Wrong; but the Christian Spirit enlarged the narrow Bounds of that Benevolence to *all* Mankind, to respect and serve the most distant Person upon Earth, as a Fellow Citizen, or next Door Neighbour, if he happen'd to want our Help, and we are possessed of Ability, and Opportunity to assist.

As to the Passions that may be injurious to ourselves, or to any Body else, Christianity is so

CHAP. far from letting them loose to Words, or Ac-
IX. tions, that it chains them within the Boundaries
of the Thoughts, and suppresses them there.

IN short, it purifies the Heart as well as enlightens the Understanding; sanctifies Affliction; and when it is for the Sake of a good Conscience, the after Prospect turns it into Joy; removes the Sting of Death, unknown to the Heathen to be the Wages of Sin; gives Joy of Mind and Peace of Conscience in the Sense of God's Favour; rectitude to our whole Behaviour; and Heaven at the End of our Days; every one of which were Strangers to the Schools of Philosophers; nor could they promise, much less secure, one of them to their Votaries. It delivers from the greatest Evils, as Slavery and Dominion of Sin, of Passion, and the Devil; the Dread of God's Anger, and the fearful Expectations and Punishments of a future Life, and in the room of them introduces, and enstates us in the contrary Enjoyments.

THE invaluable Design of its Faith and Doctrines, its Means, its Precepts and Prohibitions, its Promises and Threats, with all its other Motives, its Examples, its internal Aids, and its external Helps and Instruments, are all, and severally, to improve us in Goodness here, in order to qualify us for greater Happiness hereafter. Whoever would see "the true Gospel-Morality carried to
" higher Degrees of Purity and Perfection, than
" had been practised before either by *Jew* or
" *Gentile*; and how the Relations among Men,
" and the Duties belonging to them, center in
" God, and the Offices of this Life are connect-
" ed with the Happiness of the next.—FROM
" the

CHAP. " the *Sanctions* of Duty, which the Civil Rela-
IX. tions among Men have received from God.
" —FROM the Manner of *God's* Dealings
" with Men.—FROM the Example of *Christ*
" our Lord and Master.—FROM the Regard
" we owe to our *Holy Profession*.—FROM the
" Relation we bear to *Heaven* while we live upon
" Earth.—FROM the different *Sources* of mo-
" ral and immoral Actions.—FROM the In-
" fluence which our Regard and Disregard to the
" Duties of Morality will have upon our *future*
" *State*;" let them consult*.

AND is not this universal Rule of the Religion of the End, and of the Means, for regulating our Lives and Conversation in this World, this Word of God, legible, intelligible also, as it is by all, familiarly deliver'd to us, by the Son of God in our Likeness; stamp'd by the Authority of Miracles; by Authority also of his own Example living up to the Rules he gave; incomparably preferable to our Author's Religion of Nature, drawn from the Consideration of what makes for the Good of the Whole, and the Relations we stand in to God, and one another?

HE says †, "'Tis the Reason or Fitness of the
" Thing, that makes it a Divine Law; and con-
" sequently, that they who never heard of any
" external Revelation, yet if they knew from
" the Nature of Things, what is fit for them to
" do, they know all that God will, or can require
" of them; since his Commands are to be mea-

* The *Bishop of London's* 2 *Past.* page 68, &c. where they will find it drawn up with great Judgment, as well as Brevity. See also page 4, &c.

† Page 323.

CHAP. IX. "sur'd by the antecedent Fitness of Things; and
 "Things can only be said to be fit, or unfit, but
 "as they are for, or against the common Good."
*If they knew from the Nature of Things, what is fit
 for them to do, &c. i. e. if they know the Will of
 God, they know it; if the Sun shines, it shines.
 Things can only be said to be fit, or unfit, but as
 they are for, or against the common Good. But how
 shall the Generality know what makes most for,
 or against the common Good? Shall they be sent to
 the common Field of Nature, to glean it up
 there? or turn Patriots and Politicians in the
 Government of their Country, or Universalists in
 the universal Government of intelligent Beings,
 in order to live sober, righteous, and godly Lives
 in their private Sphere?*

AGAIN, "If the Creator will do every Thing
 "the Relation he stands in to his Creatures makes
 "it fit for him to do; and expects nothing from
 "them, but what the Relation they stand in to
 "him, and one another, makes likewise fit for
 "them to do, how can they be ignorant of their
 "Duty?" I answer, very easily in the present
 Degeneracy of human Nature; as is but too true
 in Experience in the Heathen World, ancient,
 and modern. Studious Persons of exalted Minds
 do well in enquiring into the *verbal written* Com-
 mands of the Author of Nature, by the natural
Fitness of Things; and the more they enquire, the
 more Wisdom they will be sure to discover in lay-
 ing his external Commands in the internal Nature
 and Fitness of Things: And when they find it
 out, and say, he that runs may read, and that
 it is as distinguishable as Colours to the Eye, and
 Sounds to the Ear, they hope, that every body
 else will see with *their* Eyes.

BUT

BUT with our Author to supersede external
 Revelation and rely upon *internal*, is to prefer
 Darknes to Light, or the Light of the Stars to
 that of the Sun; and to remit the Bulk of Man-
 kind to the Light of Nature, in order to find
 out the Law of Morals, is to suppose them all
 Philosophers; having a Capacity, and also Lei-
 sure for making such Discoveries. Whereas,
 upon all Occasions of Duty, *thus and thus it is
 written*, is to them, and all the World, more di-
 rectory and useful, and at hand, than thus and
 thus it may be proved by a long Train of Rea-
 soning.

AND therefore the Light of Reason in our
 Author's Way of recommending it before Reve-
 lation, is so far from being an *absolutely perfect*
 Rule, that it is, and ever will be, a very imper-
 fect one of itself; nor would a Collection out
 of all the Philosophers put together, amount
 to any thing near such a Rule; so far from being
all-sufficient and *infallible*, that, where there is a
 Revelation truly attested to come from God, to de-
 pend upon the other exclusive of this last, is most
 certain Deceit, and the horrible Danger of being
 given up to strong Delusion, to believe a Lye.

IT is the Remark of the unprejudic'd Mr.
Locke, "Whatever was the Cause, 'tis plain in
 "Fact, Human Reason unassisted, fail'd Men
 "in its great and proper Business of *Morality*. It
 "never from unquestionable Principles by their
 "Deductions, made out an entire Body of the
 "*Law of Nature*. And he that shall collect all
 "the moral Rules of the Philosophers, and
 "compare them with those contain'd in the New
 "Testament,

CHAP. " Testament, will find them to come short of
IX. " the Morality deliver'd by our *Saviour*, and
" taught by *his Apostles*; a College made up
" for the most part of ignorant, but inspired
" Fishermen*."

BUT under this deliberate setting up natural Religion, in Opposition to reveal'd, there seems to be this Mystery of Iniquity industriously conceal'd and cherish'd. That whereas Christianity is strict in requiring all Regularity of Manners sincerely consistent with the Frailty of our Nature, and severe in threatening future Punishment; whilst the other is free from any *positive* Sanction of Punishment in the Life after this; and at the same time not so express and particular in exacting Duty, or restraining the irregular Desires of corrupt Nature: It is not to be wonder'd at, if the sensual Lovers of Pleasure more than Lovers of God, or Truth, should be prejudiced in Favour of the latter: If they find out any Gloss of Reason, how fallacious soever, to recommend it, they naturally espouse what sits so light and easy upon their Minds; and take refuge under a Religion which seems to give some Liberty to pick and chuse their Obedience, and not call them to account for some Irregularities, neither here, nor hereafter.

THAT our Author in particular has *secret* Objections against Revelation, drawn from another Source than Reason, is demonstrable: Because, when the Light of Reason is to find out his Law of Nature from the more obscure Nature of Things, then it is bright and perspicu-

* *Reasonableness* of Christian. page 267, 268.

ous,

ous, absolutely perfect and all-sufficient; but CHAP.
when it comes to read the more intelligible Word IX.
of God, all of a sudden it has lost its Discernment, and can understand little or nothing of Obligation; it is all over figurative, allegorical, and as obscure, unintelligible, and useless as the *Papists* would make it, and for the same End, viz. the better to carry on an *Imposture* that must not be brought in Sight, because it would immediately disappear like Darkness before the Light of the *Holy Scripture*; and, perhaps, is at the Bottom one and the same.

As he has made great Use of a Citation out of Dr. *Prideaux's* Letter to the *Deists*, I would present his Admirers with one from the same Letter, pag. 107. " The *Papists*, who next to "*Mahomet*, have the greatest Claim to *Imposture*, as to those Errors which they teach, " very well understand how such a Cause is to be " served by both these Particulars, [mentioned " before, with respect to the People he made " choice of to propagate his *Imposture*: 1. Because of the Indifferency they were grown to " as to any Religion at all: 2. Because of the great " Ignorance they were in] and therefore make it " their Business, as much as they can, to keep " their own People in Ignorance, and pervert " all those they call *Hereticks*, to *Atheism*, and " *Infidelity*, that so having no Religion at all, " they may be the better prepared again to receive theirs."

HAD he treated the *Laws* of God and his *Covenant* with Man, with the common *civil* Interpretation, which his own Profession suggested

CHAP. IX. gested * to be due to it, he would have made good Sense of both. Or had he allow'd Christian People to make use of their common Reason without that Help, they can't fail to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest what is necessary to make wise unto Salvation; and every thing else that is requir'd of their several Capacities to make them wise and good in their Station of Life. Let them attend to that wise Direction of the *Homily* of the Church, "That there is nothing spoken in dark Mysteries in one Place, but the same is more familiarly and plainly taught to the Capacity both of the Learned, and Unlearned, in other Places; and those Things in the Scripture which are plain to understand, and necessary to Salvation, every Man's Duty is to learn them."

THIS single Rule duly observ'd, is of the most important Service for distinguishing all useful Truth, from what is either doubtful, or false in Religion. For Instance, plain Scripture, as well as plain Reason assures us, that God is a *Spirit*: How presently then does our Author's impertinent Harangue vanish, about the Scriptures ascribing Human Parts and Passions to him? It is one of the best Preservatives for preventing People being tossed to and fro with divers Winds of Doctrine, and keeping them safe from the Snares of those who lie in wait to deceive. Nay, a good Proficiency in the Scriptures, in distinguishing the plain Places from the figurative, and laying the proper Strefs accordingly upon them,

* *Puffend.* Law of Nature and Nations, Lib. V. Ch. xii. of Interpretation. And *Grot.* de jure B. Lib. II. Ch. xvi.

would

CHAP. IX. would prevent them from being either *unstable* with respect to the End, or the Means, or *unlearned* in the plain Parts of Scripture; and consequently secure them from the Danger of wresting any Scripture to their own Destruction. For who were the unlearned in *St. Peter's Time*, and *Meaning*, but they who were unlearned and to seek in that Use of them, by not studying their true Use, comparing Place with Place? As to human Learning, *St. Peter* himself was unskill'd, and therefore could endanger no body by the same Incapacity of himself. By this Rule, the *some Things hard to be understood*, would lessen more and more, and either be superseded or master'd by the many that are plain, or left as a Matter of Leisure and Curiosity, more than any real Use. But, if recent Scripture was then liable to be so fatally wrested by such Persons, whilst *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*, most undoubted infallible Interpreters of their own Meaning, were living to be consulted; can it be imagin'd, at this time, That such Persons would be prevented from wresting, or would have recourse for an Interpretation to the Office of Infallibility at *Rome*, granting all the Infallibility it can arrogate to the Farce that is acting there?

AND as the Distinction of the Religion of the END, and the Religion of the MEANS is solidly grounded in the Nature of Things; and makes every thing we can turn our Thoughts upon in the Christian Religion, fall into Subordination and Subserviency one to another, and gives the Estimate and Precedence of one Thing before another; as also the Need of one Thing to another; it is of singular Service and Benefit in regulating our Reason and Judgment in the

Search

CHAP. *Search of Scripture*, because it has respect unto all
IX. God's Commandments, and shews us the Wisdom, and the real Use of every one of them.

IT has been shewn before, how much the Christian Religion has confirm'd and strengthen'd, improved and perfected the Religion of the End, or the Religion of Nature as its Scope and Purpose, in the three Branches of Duty, to God, our Neighbour, and Ourselves. And the Improvements it has made, with respect to each of these, will receive an easy Interpretation from the common PRUDENCE it previously supposes to accompany every Man's Conduct, who would keep a good Conscience towards God, and also towards Men, as a Member of Society; as he is also a Candidate for Heaven, and would have a good Hope there.

As Virtue is required by the Apostle to be added with all Diligence to Faith, or the general Knowledge of Christianity, as its End; so this Prudence, or particular *Knowledge*, as he calls it, is commanded to be added to Virtue, as the true Discerner what is *real* Virtue in the various changing Circumstances and Relations it may be placed under, in this shifting Scene*; this *prudential Knowledge* in distinguishing Things and Circumstances, is supposed to be improving from the *Exercise* of the Sentiments of the Mind, in *discerning Good and Evil*†, what is less, what is more, and what is most useful and plain in Doctrine and Instruction; and consequently will prefer to learn our Lord's own Words and Example, from the four *Gospels*; the Success, chief Heads, and Miracles attending the Gospel in the *Acts*;

* 2 Pet. i. 5.

† Heb. v. 14.

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the consequent Mistakes and Disputes about any material Part of it occasionally cleared and set to Rights, and made the more stedfast, from preceding Doubts; and with very many Reproofs, Corrections, and additional Directions, squared to the Rule of Truth, and Intention of the Gospel, he will read and learn in the *Epistles*: From the *Psalms*, Devotion; from *Job*, Patience; from *Proverbs* and *Ecclesiastes*, both the Value, and the Rules of the Conduct of civil Life; and in the *Historical Books* of the *Old Testament*, in Connexion with the *New*, he will trace out and adore the wonderful Works of God, in his Providence, foreseeing, directing, and adjusting all Things to the great Affair of Man's Redemption.

1. As we would keep a good Conscience towards GOD; when an Action is forbidden, all the Tendencies in Thought, and ill Appearances in Fact, of that Action are to be forborn. For Instance, we are forbidden Murther, Adultery, therefore we are to indulge nothing of that Tendency in our Thoughts: we are not to forswear ourselves upon the solemn Occasions that Oaths are required, for an End of all Strife, therefore required in order to prevent that, and preserve a due Regard for the Name of God, *not to swear at all* in our *common* Conversation: If a Duty is required, the Opportunities for performing it are to be embraced; always remembering, that every positive Injunction implies a Prohibition of the contrary Vices and Hindrances.

2. MEMBERS of SOCIETY ought to preserve a good Conscience towards Men; and as the Laws of every particular Society, are the Measures

CHAP. IX. Measures of Obedience approved by God as his own Ordinance to *that* Society, the Commands of Princes, and those put in Authority under them, of Masters, Parents, and other Superiors, are to be observ'd in *all Things* agreeable to *those Laws*, which are the Measure of the *publick* Good: For where absolute Power, and not Law, rules, there is no *publick*. This explains Subjects, Servants, Children's obeying in *all Things*. And as the Preservation of ourselves and Families, the main End of Society, is the Measure of Kindness and Beneficence to others; that explains the *lending, hoping for nothing again, and the giving to every one that asks of us*. And as the Preservation of Society is the Measure and Valuation of all the Injuries any private Person can receive in Name, Body, or Goods; that explains the Meaning, and sets the true Bounds of *loving Enemies*, and of *him that takes away thy Goods, ask them not again*; and shews when we are at Liberty to vindicate our Wrongs, and to forbear, or make use of Law, just as the Occasion is frivolous or tolerable, grievous and intolerable. If of this latter Sort; the open Reparation of such Injury is allowed, whilst secret Revenge is forbid to accompany the Process, the Execution of the Law being one Instance of doing Good to those that hate us, as well as doing Good to the Society: And besides praying for such an Enemy, we may at the time do as many Kindnesses as Prudence shall advise for the speedier Conquest of him, in case he is of a generous Nature. For the Law of Love and Benevolence which such an Enemy violates, is never the less in its full Force, with respect to our Obedience to it, and we ought, not only to wish, but promote his true Good, as we have Opportunity, as well out of Hopes of reducing him

him to his Duty, as out of Concern, lest we be found wanting in our own. One Way or other, he is to be overcome; because the revenging of Injuries perpetuates the Disorders of Society, and brings home as many Damages as it offers to others; and if the doing Good for Evil will not subdue all Tempers, the Law that knows no Revenge, may seasonably take place, to put a Stop to the Effects of his Enmity. As all moral Duties are founded in that Nature and Reason of Things, which is the Will of God antecedent to Revelation, so the Nature and Reason of Things is left by God in all his general Precepts of Morality, to be the Interpreter of them, for the best Benefit of particular Persons, in Conjunction with the publick Good.

3. BEING a Candidate for HEAVEN; as heavenly Things are to be preferr'd before earthly, in all Prudence, whenever they are incompatible, Prudence will explain and proportion its Measures in observing those Precepts; *Take no Thought for To-morrow*; and those concerning *Self-denial, Mortification* of irregular Appetites, parting with an *offending Right-Hand, praying without ceasing, &c.*

MORTIFYING *the Flesh with its Affections and Lusts*, will at least mean all Excesses and Irregularities that are mischievous to others, or ourselves, that war against the Soul and its Government, and the publick Good of Society; Self-denial is always in our Power, a constant Virtue incumbent in all Temptations to the contrary; and is best maintain'd by that regular Piety and Devotion, which, *ceasing not* at its returning Times and Seasons, keeps the Soul above

CHAP. this World, and checks the Reins of its Appetites
 IX. for all Things in it. "The most perfect Scope
 of *Temperance in all Things*, being not to afflict
 the Body merely for Affliction Sake, but to
 keep it under, and raise and facilitate the
 "Service and Ministration of spiritual Things *."
 Or as St. Paul expresses it, *striving for the Ma-*
stery, in Prospect of an *incorruptible Crown*. The
 Body being the chief Occasion of various Sins, in
 the various Temperature of its Passions, there
 can be no due Care of the Soul, without a due
 Guard upon the other. So that a *masterly So-*
briety is the Rule and Measure of those Things,
 and that is the Advice of Reason and Prudence,
 as well as of Holy Scripture. *Presenting the Body*
a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, is called
 in this last, a *reasonable Service*; to reclaim the
 Body to its due Subjection to the Spirit, must
 needs be a *reasonable Service*, because it is a Re-
 covery to pristine Rule and Regimen, which
 was unreasonably usurp'd in the first Man, and
 unreasonably deferr'd to be recover'd by Chri-
 stians, who are put in the Way by Christ. And
 Tully prescribes in his Laws, *Lib. II. Ut non casto*
modo Corpore, sed Animo etiam adeatur ad Deos.

As to the Religion of the MEANS, that
 being the vital Part of Christianity, as it is itself
 a Revelation of the best Means to the best End;
 and as the Design of that is to bring us Salvation
 and eternal Life, upon the Terms, and in the
 Way and Manner it prescribes; if there is the

* 'Ο τελωτάτης ὁ ἐμεγαλείας σκοπός, ἐχ' πρὸς τὸ σω-
 ματι, βλέπειν κακοπάθειαν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸ τῶν ψυχῶν
 διακονημάτων εὐχολίαν. *Greg. Nyss. of the Worship of God,*
chap. xxii.

least Degree of true Reason and Prudence left in CHAP.
 Men and Sinners, it will shew itself: I. In re- IX.
 ceiving and interpreting every thing of *pure Re-*
velation relating to *Jesus Christ*, the appointed
 Mediator between God and Man, the Head of
 all the Means for reconciling us, and obtaining
 from him, Remission of Sins, Peace of Conscience,
 Joy and Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, and all
 the Glories and Felicities of eternal Life, as they
 are in Truth the *pure Mercy, free Grace, and*
unmerited Favour of Heaven.

SEEING Reason, without Revelation, could
 never have made the Discovery, much less make
 the least Claim of Right, or merit to such an
 unspeakable Gift, it should neither presume to
 add to, nor diminish from it; but embrace it
 with all Thankfulness, just as it is offer'd upon
 the Terms and Conditions propounded to us;
 and, accordingly on our Part, so to respect and
 obey those Commands for believing in him dying
 for our Sins, to avert all Evils from us; and in-
 terceding at the Right-Hand of God to procure
 all Good; as to delay no longer to repent us of
 our Sins; to draw near to God with the filial
 Acceptance we are adopted to; offering up
 our Prayers and Praises in his Name; and liv-
 ing in Holiness and Righteousness all the Days
 of our Life. As the common Discretion of Gra-
 titude, in order to strike the deeper Impression
 on the Mind, teaches to magnify, rather than
 diminish the Value of a free generous Gift;
 so, in case of doubt, we should incline to that
 Side of Interpretation which ascribes all the
 Greatnesses and Perfections of the Divine Na-
 ture to the Son of God, who descended from
 Heaven to save this World, that are consistent
 T 2 with

CHAP. with his being the *Son* of God, and not the *Father* himself.
IX.

2. As these are Means, and no more than Means, Prudence will instruct us that all their Efficacy and Value as to ourselves, consists in their Application to, and Production of their designed End; and till that End is obtain'd, they have more of a condemning, than a saving Profession towards us. Faith without Works is dead, and Knowledge in all Mysteries, without Charity, nothing worth; Faith without Works, in the eloquent Allusion of the Apostle, is the same insolent insolvent Absurdity, as feeding the Bellies, and cloathing the Backs of the Poor with Words only.

3. As these Means are indispensably necessary (where they are promulg'd) for that End; Prudence will accordingly apply them with all Diligence and Gratitude; not daring to make the least Alteration, or hoping for any Acceptance with God in contemning his Will and Wisdom in appointing them so expressly for that End, and to our own Good. And the same Prudence will convince us, that as private Reason is the Judge and Measure of the Circumstances of private Service of God in those Means, so *public* Discretion ought to be the Judge and Measure of the Circumstances of the *publick* Worship and Service of Him. And as *indifferent* Things in that Worship, are the sole Object of *Magistracy* and *Authority*, whenever it thinks fit to interpose and recommend, wheresoever nothing does creep in as a Sin and Transgression of the general Law of *Decency*, *Order*, and *Edification*, never to use, or stretch *Liberty*, in case
of

doubtful Interpretation, to the Prejudice and Diminution of *Government* and *Obedience*, those great Blessings and Preservatives of Society.
CHAP. IX.

THESE few prudential Observations will serve to rescue the Scriptures from those puzzling Obscurities our Author purposely throws upon them, in so many Pages of his Book, in order to render them an useless Rule of Religion. He us'd to shew some seeming respect to Christianity with regard to its Morality, and pretend to value it as a Republication of the Law of Nature, and acknowledge our Saviour as a Prophet and Teacher; yet, according to his accustomed Inconsistency, he endeavours to pull down what he himself built, and destroy not only one, but every Part of that admirable Restorative of the Corruption of human Nature: A further Confirmation this, that the true and only Reason of his, and others of his way of thinking, declaring War against it, is nothing else but the *Goodness* of its Morals, and that Aid to, and Improvement of our disorderly Nature, which the old Philosophers languish'd after, but these Men abhor; which is however giving in an Enemy's Testimony to the Truth of it; that *they who do Evil hate the Light, neither come to it, lest their Deeds should be reprov'd*, John iii. 20.

THESE few Observations, I say, with 1. The additional Care of duly observing, in all connected Discourses, the Context, in the Scope of the Words, the Coherence and Connexion of the Parts of the Discourse, with the Design of the Author, which is a never-failing Key to the true Sense and Meaning of his Words.

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2. ALWAYS interpreting *figurative*, by plainer Expressions, relating to the same Subject, where they are to be found; and where they are not so expounded by other Texts, extending the Figure, or proverbial Expression, or Parable, no farther than the *precise Point* of that Figure or Illustration it was adapted to.

3. ALWAYS understanding (for there can be no Inconsistency in Truth, nor any Lye come of it) *literal* Expressions so, as to contradict no one Attribute of God, whether natural or moral, that is plainly known to belong to him; nor any eternal Distinction between Good and Evil in Morality.

4. RESOLVING upon doing the Will of God, putting on the becoming *Love of the Truth*; and laying aside all Passion, Prejudice, and disagreeing Interest, arising from *Filthiness, Superfluity of Naughtiness*, and worldly Lufts.

5. PRAYER for the Assistance of the *Holy Spirit*, who delights to encourage Enquiries into the Sense of things, of his own inditing. In the Help of this mentioned improving *Prudence*, all well-disposed Christians will receive with *Meekness the ingrafted Word*, not as it is the Word of Men, but as it is in Truth the Word of God; a plain clear Rule of Faith and Manners in all the Necessaries of Salvation, which was its primary Design to make us wise in. And secondly in all other instructive, corrective, and accomplishing Parts, wherewith it would perfect and adorn our Knowledge and Practice; and exalt and consummate us in the highest Glory and Felicity appointed

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appointed unto Mortals. Or, in the Words of CHAP.
that great Searcher after Truth, Mr. Locke, IX.
“ Therein are contain’d the Words of eternal
“ Life. It has God for its Author; Salvation
“ for its End; and Truth, without any Mixture
“ of Error, for its Matter *.” Or, in the Phrase
of 2 *Esd.* xiv. 47. *In them is the Spring of Under-
standing, the Fountain of Wisdom, and the Stream of
Knowledge.*

* His Letter to the Reverend Mr. King, p. 345. *Collection of Pieces.*





CHAP. X.

*Of the PRIESTLY Office of our MEDIATOR
upon Earth.*

CHAP.
X.

IN treating upon this most important Subject how God was in Christ reconciling the World to himself, according to the amiable Truth as it is in *Jesus*, I will 1. Shew what is not the Method Mankind is to depend upon. 2. What is the Method laid down in Scripture for obtaining Salvation, or which is the same Thing, Remission of Sins and eternal Life.

UNDER the first Head I will shew that where the Gospel is promulg'd, neither the Republication of the Law of Nature, nor the Example of Christ suffering Death, as a *bare* Testimony to God's reconcilable Disposition to penitent Sinners, nor Repentance grounded upon the presumptive Goodness of God, were intended to be relied upon: Nor are any of them, or all together, sufficient to support the Hopes of any nominal Christian, and therefore ought to be rectified as dangerous Mistakes.

1. NOT the Republication of the Law of Nature, which our Author makes the Sum total of Christianity; because, that shews us from whence we are fallen, and points out the End of our

I

Creation,

Creation, in all the Instances of Duty we have deflected from; and, instead of justifying, serves to accuse us, and bring our Sins to Remembrance. It is but little Comfort to Rebels to have a new Edition of the Laws against Rebellion put out, they knew too much against themselves before. *Do this and live*, upon the old footing, is killing them twice over; or to what Purpose should they repent upon the same Bottom? *Righteousness* was the original Constitution of the Kingdom of God, but the Mediator making Peace for Sinners, added to the future Constitution of it, *Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost*, upon Repentance and Amendment, which was to supply lost Innocence.

AND as a gracious Pardon is at the same time proclaim'd for Deviations, how great, or many soever, excepting none, but such as subvert the Belief of that gracious Method of the God of all Mercy, then it suits their Circumstances indeed, and belongs to them to listen and enquire what are the Terms and Conditions of forgiveness and reconciliation: And if they are found to be not only practicable, but very easy, and adjusted to the Weakness of our present nature, and the commandments new qualified to the Capacity of our obedience; and are no other than the Rules and Measures of new and greater Happiness upon future obedience; what Rebel in his wits would not joyfully receive the Terms, as Life from the dead? Or not embrace the Conditions as a new Lease and Covenant of existence and enjoyment of himself? Or think Obedience a burthen, when the ways thereof are Pleasantness and Peace, with Happiness consummate, and within his Reach? Who would neglect

CHAP. X. neglect to wash and be clean, and blot out his Sins, and be received into the appointed Capacity of Favour, only because he was *commanded* so to do by a Sovereign, as much superior to him in Reason and Understanding, as he is in Power and Dignity? Or refuse to remember the Mediator of that better Covenant? Who so obligingly procured and proclaim'd this Pardon to Rebels, in the way, and to the purpose he would be remembered. Though he requir'd neither one nor the other, (as has been before observed, *Chap. VI.*) but to nourish us up in Devotion, and more perfect Amendment in the moral Law of Nature.

THEREFORE there is Reason to conclude, that neither Amendment, nor Repentance, nor Devotion, can be perform'd by them with any assurance of Acceptance, as long as they despise the intervening Pardon, and reconciling Grace of the Mediator, with respect to that Law which is holy, just, and good, and their Behaviour towards it, which is the Reverse, in very many Respects, as they know in their Conscience: And consequently, through their own Obstinacy, lie under the Condemnation of that Law, without any to help. For that they are not able by any other Method to help themselves, will appear afterwards.

2. NOT the *Example* of Christ, &c. because that likewise helps to condemn us, inasmuch as our Imitation can't come up to the Perfection of his. He is the only perfect Pattern we can follow; but if our Hope of Salvation is built upon equalling Him, who then can be saved?

THE

THE chief Things recommended to our Imitation, are his *Humility* and *Patience*. But as the saving Virtue of the Redeemer extended to all Generations *before* his Birth, as well as to those since, how could they receive the Benefit of bettering their Morals by his non-apparent Example of those Virtues; if something farther was not anticipated from the Propitiation of his Death, then latent under the Death of their Sacrifices?

THE perfect Obedience of his Life, indeed, so far satisfied, *i. e.* fulfill'd the preceptive Part of the Law, as to justify both the Law and the Law-giver, that they were holy, just, and good, in exacting of Man perfect Obedience to it; since the *second Adam*, in our Nature, actually and willingly perform'd that Righteousness, which the first *Adam* was wilfully defective in. Not that he came to fulfil the preceptive Part of the Law for us, so as to excuse our best Endeavours to keep and do it; but, wherein we are insolvent by reason of the Frailty of our Nature, in paying that Debt due from us by Creation and Preservation, he paid for us; and by his Obedience unto Death, moreover, whereby many became Righteous, he conditionally satisfied and fulfilled the vindicative Part of the Law for us, and so discharged that Debt of Punishment due (in the literal Sense of Demerit, in the metaphorical, of *Wages* payable by the Devil, who had the Power of Death) to that Part of the Law; which for us to have paid ourselves, without Hope of a Resurrection, would have been the eternal Ruin of that Part of us, our Body. But God governing by the Nature of Things, and Man having subjected himself to Death, it became necessary for him

CHAP. him to submit to it, in order to regain, through
 X. the *second Adam*, That Immortality to his Body,
 which the Tree of Life was ordained to impart,
 had he continued in his first State; but as well
 that Immortality as that Tree were forfeited by
 the *Disobedience* of the *first Adam*.

NOR was his Obedience unto Death, as a bare *Testimony* of the Truth of the Doctrine of Remission of Sins upon Repentance, or as a martyr'd *Witness* to the Truth that God was in his Disposition placable and reconcileable to penitent Sinners, the Thing intended to be relied upon. Because the Persons, who have no other Opinion of the Death of Christ, but this, would have been equally persuaded of that Truth from the Notions they entertain of the Goodness of God, whether Christ had died in such a Manner or not; or whether he had ever been once mention'd in Scripture as a Mediator between God and Man, or not.

WHAT had a Mediator to do, or undertake in such a Case? There was no Peace to make but what Man was sufficient to, of himself. Or what need of a new or better Covenant? Or what Occasion for any new Terms or Conditions? If the *Jews* or *Greeks*, understood *Christ crucified* in no other Sense, than dying in *Testimony* of the Truth of his Doctrine, how could it be a Stumbling Block to one, or Foolishness to the other; since one had their *Socrates*, and the other built the Tombs of the Prophets, they had kill'd upon that Account? The *Blood of righteous Abel*, the first Witness and Martyr of Truth, *speakes* his own particular Reward in another State, but the *Blood of sprinkling*, for the cleansing of Conscience,
speakes

speakes better Things, even the Assurance of eternal Life and Salvation to all that believe, and obey. CHAP. X.

IF the refreshing the Mind of Sinners with such a Truth in Theory, that God was of a placable Nature, was all that was wanting, God might have commission'd any mere Man, to have preached up such a Doctrine, and died for it at last; if any Set of Men could be found so barbarous to their own Hopes, as to take away his Life for that Assertion. But this is never once mentioned to be the End, and Design of Christ's Death, because a further Truth, vastly superior to the other, (as much superior, as *Matter of Fact* is to Arguments *a Priori*, or a Principle or Cause is to the Conclusion or Effect drawn from it, or the Manner of a Thing actually done, is to the Possibility of its being done) was witnessed, and intended to be relied upon for Remission of Sins, and the Salvation of the World. And that was that God was *actually, publickly* (know all Men by these Presents) *aton'd*, and *propitiated* by, and through the Means, and Method, and *Matter of Fact* of Christ dying for our Sins; that our Peace with God is made for us, by the Blood of his Cross*.

A TRUTH in Theory before it is verified into a Reality, is not capable of being transferred, and assign'd over to those, who are to receive the Benefit of it; but when it becomes a *Speciality*, a real *Act* and *Deed*, it is transferable as a *Right*, and *Property*, upon the Conditions that go along with it: And therefore *we rejoice, we glory, we*

* Col. i. 20.

CHAP. X. joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the Atonement*. We have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins, Col. i. 14. He is affirmed to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People, Heb. ii. 17. and that he is merciful and faithful in that Office; which was the offering Gifts and Sacrifice for Sin; that certainly implies reconciling God to Sinners, which was the very Province of the Jewish High Priest by the yearly Sacrifice on the great Day of Atonement: *The Blood of the everlasting Covenant is affirmed to be the Means whereby God becomes the God of Peace*, Heb. xiii. 20. And our Mediator, who by his precious Blood-shedding, was our Peace-maker with God, is said to be our Peace†. And therefore in every Place, where Mention is made of our being reconciled to God by the Death of his Son, or the World, or all Things reconciled, or in a Posture of Reconciliation with himself in, or through Christ, there is always Mention of our Peace being also made with God.

IN the first covenant in Paradise, though between a Superior and Inferior, there was no need of a Mediator, because as long as the Law or Covenant was observed, there was perfect Harmony and Friendship between God and Man; but as soon as that was broke, the Peace was broke, and God would no more covenant or treat with Man, but through a Mediator. But the very Nature of that Covenant supposes and expresses God to be reconciled and pacify'd towards Man, as well as Man towards God; *I will establish my*

* Rom. v. 2, 3, 11. † Eph. ii. 14. John xvi. 33. Acts x. 36. Rom. v. 1. Col. i. 19. Isaiah ix. 6.

CHAP. X. Covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: That thou may'st remember and be confounded, and never open thy Mouth any more because of thy Shame, when I am PACIFYED towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God. Ezek. xvi. 62, 63. Indeed the very Notion of a Reconciliation between two Parties, by Means of a Third, sufficiently implies, that both Parties are at Variance, one with the other; there is otherwise hardly any Sense to be made of Christ our Mediator reconciling Man to God, unless he also reconciled God to Man. There lies the Strength of the Apostle's inference, and the whole emphasis of his intreaty; God was in Christ reconciling the World to himself, *not imputing their Trespases unto them*; that was a Demonstration he was reconciled, and the first Person in the Difference that was so; then addressing to the inferior, Man, *we pray you, in Christ's Stead, be ye reconciled to God**: And makes this the very ground and foundation of that Prayer in Christ's Stead; *for he hath made him to be Sin for us*, [Sin-Offering] *who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him*.

IF Man only had been at Variance with Heaven, which is but half the Truth of the Case, a common Angel was Envoy sufficient to have been sent thence; or an Arch-Angel might have put on the Character of an Ambassador. But when a Mediator interposes, who is more in Person, in Power, and in Interest, than either of the other, and who has himself Ambassadors under Him, viz. his Apostles; it is Evidence sufficient to all the World, that there was a Breach be-

* 2 Cor. v. 19, 20.

CHAP. tween, and a mutual Reconciliation wanting between God and Man.

IN one respect, he may be said to die a *Witness*, and is accordingly styled *the Faithful and true Witness* *, i. e. of the essential *Holiness* and *Righteousness* of his Father in hating Sin, and requiring Man's Obedience to his most righteous Laws, and upon Failure, adjudging the denounc'd Punishment. For which Reason, in his Addresses to him, he never styles him merciful, but *holy, righteous Father, in his finishing the work he gave him to do* †; which work, when finished, gave full *Satisfaction* to that supreme Perfection of the Father, which is the foundation of his moral government over Man. At the redemption out of *Egypt* his Appellations were, *glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders*. And both Parties being put into a State of Reconciliation, gives a compleat Notion of Expiation and Propitiation made by the Mediator for the Offender towards the Offended; Restitution and Satisfaction to the Majesty of the Divine Laws being stipulated and covenanted on Man's Part, as far as he is able, and wherein he fails through Imperfection, made good. Thus the Goodness and Mercy of God flows from, and is regulated by right Ideas of the Perfection of his Holiness. And that universal proclamation that eternal exercise of Tongues in Heaven, *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty*, was loudly *witnessed* on Earth, in and by the Death of the Mediator.

3. NOR is that grand *Asylum* of the Deists, *Repentance*, with its supposed Amendment,

* Rev. iii. 14:

† John xvii.

grounded

grounded upon the *presumptive* Goodness of God, CHAP. to be depended upon for Remission of Sins, and X. eternal Life: I call it the *presumptive* Goodness of God, as they assume upon it, in Opposition to his *promised, revealed, covenanted* Goodness, in the Mediator Christ. Had God thought Repentance sufficient, though it was the natural and only Means of Recovery, in conjunction with Prayer, that Man could suggest, after he was fallen into a State of Sin and Guilt, he might have accepted it in the first Covenant of Works: But had he given any Intimation upon that first Trial of Obedience, of his Acceptance of Repentance, it would directly have contradicted the very Law he had given; supplanted his own Intention, and, instead of establishing Innocence, had encouraged Transgression.

AND if the wilful and ungrateful Transgression of that Law brought more Contempt upon God's Authority over his new-made Creature, newly subjected to a *particular* Restraint in proof of continual Dependence (as a Creature ought to be to his Creator) than the Tenor of his Obedience all the Days of his Life could have brought Honour and Glory to him: Inasmuch as this last is no more than a just Debt of Reason, and Creation, in preferring the Service and Favour of God before those low contemptible Rivals, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; and therefore could have no higher Honour in it than the paying a just Debt or Tribute that a Man is obliged to; but, with deliberate Reason, actually to prefer either of them before the infinitely superior good and great Creator, (as is the Case of every wilful Transgression of his Law) is the very sinfulness of Sin, the greatest Dishonour and Disparagement

CHAP. of God, and the greatest Enormity and Iniquity
X. of Reason, that the Thoughts of Man can be
guilty of.

CONSEQUENTLY, if Man would of himself think of any suitable Reparation to his Honour, or any tolerable Vindication of his Law and Authority for the Contempt put upon it, he must devise some honorary, meritorious Act of Obedience, as much *above* what he was formerly obliged to, as the Contempt he was guilty of, was *below* his Duty; but if the utmost *whole* of his Obedience is no more than what is justly due, and God has a rightful Claim to it *all*; how can a *broken* Obedience be judg'd sufficient for that Purpose? It is therefore impossible, in the Judgment of Reason, that a Return to Duty by Way of Repentance and Amendment, can effect it.

No, though we had kept all the Commandments, we had still been but unprofitable Servants; what then can an unconstant patch'd-up Behaviour avail in the Sight of God? Supposing at the best, the Remnant of Life that is left, to be as clean and regular as it ought to be, how can Repentance alone claim an Acquittance, or Pardon of that Part that is past, and has been ill spent? The rest of the Piece may be full of Stains and Blots; Can the clean Part wash out that? Does not almost every one know more Evil by himself, than he knows Good? Which by the way, is the true Reason why People are so prone in all Places, and at all times, to believe and report more Evil of their Neighbour, than Good. What Interest can such an impure extravagant Creature pretend to have in God, in his own Person? He that can pretend to be perfectly innocent,

innocent, may pretend also to justify himself, and stand before him in Judgment; but who has the Presumption to think of that? God then must be the *Father* of the *Penitent* by adopting and accepting us in his Son. The Conscience consequent upon past Sins, is still present, upon Reflection, to accuse for those Deviations of the Law, nor can it exonerate itself of those Accusations, without laying hold of somebody more righteous, to entreat for it, and of some Assurance of Remission of Sin in a Promise of Pardon, publish'd and certain.

SANCTIONS of Rewards and Punishments are the Support of all Law and Government in Heaven, and Earth. But no Law nor Authority in either can stand, and be safe, if the bare Repentance of criminal Subjects without any thing further, was to pass current in Lieu of Obedience, and be commuted for the Punishment incurr'd, as oft as they pleased; there would be no Difference betwixt Law and no Law; Governor and govern'd would be upon a Level; and the Subject a Law to himself: nay, had God proclaim'd his Acceptance of Sinners Repentance, with their Promises of Amendment accompanying, without the Interposition of a Mediator, (or a more valuable Consideration for securing the Dignity of his Laws, and re-asserting, or rather heightning the Majesty of his Authority in the Hearts of his Subjects, by what he did, and suffer'd) the natural Disobedience of Man would take Encouragement to go on, increase, and multiply.

FOR, in that Case, the Deceitfulness of Sin would soon teach him to flatter himself; and
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CHAP. X. draw such Inferences from the magnify'd Goodness of God, as are easy and suitable to his beloved Lusts. If God is so good to me as to proclaim his Acceptance of my Repentance, upon my Promise of Amendment; my Non-amendment is a greater Object of his Goodness, and therefore surely he will accept my Repentance *without* Amendment; and as a Piece or some small Part of Repentance is a greater Object still of his Goodness than the whole Sorrow and Contrition of that Duty; is it not more glorious to the Amplitude of that Attribute to accept of a *Part*, instead of the Whole? Thus the Law of God upon such a defective Proclamation, (which is all that the *Deists* desire to hear of) would be totally disregarded; and by Degrees lose its Respect even from Repentance itself, any farther than in Name.

WHAT Occasion for Repentance any farther? If what our Author says is true, "That no Man breaks the Divine Laws out of Contempt of his Maker, or imagines he can do God an Injury *.—" That in punishing, he acts not as an injur'd Party, who wants Satisfaction, or Reparation of Honour.—" None ought to be punish'd, (since what is pass'd can't be help'd) but to prevent a future Breach of the Law.—" It is Tyranny to multiply Punishments on Pretence of vindicating the Honour of the Legislator.—" Anger is to be excluded from the Deity, as the weak womanish Part of our Nature †.—" he would otherwise not enjoy a Moment's Quiet ‡."

* Page 32.

† Page 33.

‡ Page 34.

HE argues upon a Supposition that all the Laws of God were designed for our Good; and therein he is right: But then he mistakes what that real Good of Man is, which those Laws proposed to advance; there is the Ground of his fallacious Arguments. Was it the Good of sensual Delights, and the uninterrupted Enjoyment of this World, which he seems only to have his Eye upon, his Conclusions would be every one right. But if the Commands of God are so many Rules and Directories of our highest Good, to the Perfection of our Nature, and our Obedience to them so many essential Qualifications for our future Happiness in Heaven; then our Disobedience, though it disturbs not the Tranquillity and Happiness of God, certainly disoblige and undervalues his Love, and dishonours his Wisdom in giving us such Laws for our Good; and, he has Reason, if not for his own Sake, at least for ours, and the rest of his rational Creatures, to resent such Contempt, and be angry at such Disappointment, and punish such Obstinacy, when it is irreformable; as every wise and affectionate Parent would do, when his Children take unruly Courses.

AND the more Concern is shewn in his heavenly Dispensations for repairing the Contempt, and vindicating the Honour of those holy Laws; and by all other Ways, procuring our Compliance to them, the more apparently he consults our Good, and the more we correspond to that his Intention, the more Honour we do him, as our Law-giver, the more we live to, and act for his Glory, as our God and Governor.

CONSEQUENTLY the Practice of Sin which is justly stiled *Enmity* to God, and proportionably every Scheme for encouraging it, being a Contradiction to, and an actual Endeavour to frustrate this Governor, of the great End and Direction of his Government, the general Happiness of Man in both Worlds, which is the *greatest Good* imaginable; the other being a declar'd Opposition to this Good, must be the *greatest Evil* imaginable. And the Guilt of it persisted in, after so much Goodness and Mercy in sending his Son into the World, to remedy this Evil, and subdue this Opposition by the Kindness of his Doctrine, his Life, his Death, his Intercession, must deserve the greatest Punishment imaginable.

He brings two Quotations* from Christian Writers concerning the natural Efficacy of Repentance for procuring Pardon and Reconciliation with God, argued from the Attribute of Divine Goodness. But it had been more to his Purpose, to have cited some Heathen, an utter Stranger to all Revelation, arguing in like Manner from the Goodness and Wisdom of God. For it is plain, all the Arguments of Deists, and others, who are acquainted with the Christian Revelation, have received that Improvement from their improved Notion of the Goodness of God; not as it is discoverable *a priori* from the Light of Nature, but as it is discover'd *ex post facto* from Revelation.

BECAUSE, in fact, the Heathen Philosophers are not found to argue at that rate; being em-

* Page 354.

baras'd

baras'd with the inextricable Difficulty, how to reconcile their natural Notion of the Divine Justice, as Governor and Punisher of evil Deeds, with the Divine Goodness, inclining to Pardon; there is an universal Silence as to Remission of Sins; and the Duty of Repentance issuing out of that Persuasion, must be in Proportion to it. There is but one remarkable Instance of their Repentance in History, that of the *Ninevites* threaten'd with immediate Destruction; yet their Belief of Remission of Sins amounted to no more than, *perhaps, who can tell*, but God will turn from his fierce Wrath: Even Mr. Bayle himself, in his Dictionary, Article *Zia* or *Zea*, confesses that he does not remember, in all his vast Reading, one Instance of any of the Heathens asking Pardon for their Sins: See towards the Conclusion of his Notes on that Article: Tho' Forgiveness of Sin is so rich a Blessing as to tempt the Prayers of Men and Sinners, still the Heathen had no Notion of the Want of it. Therefore the Repentance, which the modern Deists set up their Staff in for Reconciliation with God, having quite perish'd out of the Heathen World, must be borrow'd from that Revelation they so much despise.

THE Heathens knowing no one appointed Mediator, nor any certain acceptable Sacrifice for Sin, in order to appease the Doubts and Tumults in human Breasts, had Recourse to infinite feign'd Mediators, (in *Hesiod's* Time, the Number was got up to thirty thousand Gods) and to endless Sacrifices; *expiatory* for turning away Wrath; or *petitionary* for obtaining Blessing; or *eucharistical* for returning Thanks (seldom or never used) changing from this to that, multiplying all

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Sorts

CHAP. X. Sorts in each Kind, uncertain of the Validity of any; and exhorted others to depend upon the same Devotion to Heaven, without any Mention of Repentance towards God. Both of which had been most absurd both in Theory and Practice, had it ever enter'd into their Thoughts, that Repentance and Amendment were sufficient, of *themselves*, to atone the Deity. Some few Philosophers, it must be own'd, had better Notions of worshipping God, in Hopes of Acceptance, from a pure Mind; and the Resolution of imitating the Moral, *i. e.* the truly Godlike Portraits of him, whom they adored,

BUT that Remission of Sins and some Benefit of the new Covenant, founded in the Mediator promised to the first Progenitor of Mankind, may be extended throughout all Ages, to as many in every Heathen Nation as diligently seek to please God, in the Disadvantages they lie under, is a Notion of Reconciliation and Pardon most becoming the Goodness of God: because, though they themselves are ignorant of that *Promise*, the Mediator of the Covenant is present to negotiate the Effect of it to their Benefit; in Compassion to the Sincerity of their best Endeavours; and of their Wishes after more Knowledge, under their deplored Want of the same.

THEREFORE it would have become our Author, in his Observations on these Words of Dr. Clark, *That as no Man ever deny'd, but that the Benefit of Christ's Death extended backward, to those who lived before his Appearance in the World; so no one can prove, but the same Benefit may extend itself forward to those, who never heard of his Appearance; though they lived after it.* "If both these,

" though

CHAP. X. " though knowing nothing of Christ, or his Death, reap the Benefit of his Death; what more can the most perfect Believer expect? So " that even upon this Supposition, the Doctor " must have own'd, that all Men living up to " that Light God has given them, are upon a " Level, in relation to their future Happiness, *pag.* 378. to have drawn the true Inference, which is the proper Application to the *Deists*: Seeing they are neither perfect Believers; nor can they pretend never to have heard of the Appearance of Christ; what *Benefit*, what future Happiness are *they* like to have of his Death?—The Doom of their wilful Unbelief is too melancholy an Answer to such a Query.

FOR the Point of all the Arguments of all *resolute Deists* turns upon themselves, and wounds their own Souls; and destroys their boasted Hopes of Reconciliation, from their misapply'd Notions of the Goodness of God in Favour of the Repentance and Amendment they depend upon in a Christian Country: Here lies the unhappy, unperceiv'd Fallacy, and the very Misery of their Mistakes. They have read the Holy Scriptures of the *Old and New Testament*; there they found with Pleasure, the Manifestations made of God, as full of Pity, Mercy, Compassion, Forbearance, Pardon and Forgiveness of Sinners, slow to Anger, and not willing that any should perish, &c. or as our Author has it, whose *Nature and Property is ever to forgive*: These strong Lights and charming Lines of the Love and Goodness of God to Sinners, they ungratefully borrow from Revelation, and with a plagiarist Pencil work into their natural Picture of the Goodness of God, which they pretend to draw from the Light of Nature

CHAP. X. Nature *only*; and so set up natural Religion grounded thereupon, in Opposition to, and utter Destruction of revealed Religion. And all the Time, have so little Sense of natural Justice, as to make no Restitution to the latter, for all the Beauties and Excellencies they have stolen from it; but go on to accuse what they are principally beholden to, and set their Maker at nought, exclusive whereof their Notions, of Repentance had been unpublith'd. But Ingratitude against God, in order to deny him in his Dispensations, and affront him in his wise Methods of shewing Mercy unto Men, will never prosper.

LET them know, that all those Manifestations which they unworthily encroach upon, are no less, nor no other than the Displays of God and his Goodness in *actual Covenant* with Mankind, through a *Mediator*; that all that Mercy and Pity, Pardon and Forgiveness to Sinners is *promised*, is *stipulated*, is *covenanted* upon certain Conditions, in and through him; and that Repentance and Amendment is but one of the Conditions.

OUR Author falsely asserts, *that what is past can't be help'd*; though it is true, in a natural physical Sense, what is done can't be undone; yet, in a moral Sense, as to the *Effect* and *Consequence* of the Action, if the Guilt and Punishment of it is released, through the Mediator, the Action itself is undone.

BUT if they will arrogate to themselves Remission of Sins upon Repentance and Amendment, in Contempt of the Mediator who procured it, it is but righteous in the Saviour of Men

Men to laugh also at their contemptuous Devices, CHAP. X. and leave them to the ruinous Effects of being their own Saviours. They may as well set up to forgive their own Sins, and lay God quite aside, as not permit Him, who is certainly a little wiser than themselves, who is the offended Party moreover, and should know best, and have the most Right to declare upon what Terms he will be reconciled, to chuse the Method and the Manner Offenders are to comply with, as ever they expect his Favour.

To be *without Christ* is the same Thing as to be *Strangers from the Covenants of Promise*; and to be Strangers to that, the same as to be *without Hope*; and to be without that, the same Thing as to be *without God in the World*, Eph. xi. 12. the Original is *ἄθεοι*, let them english it.

BUT these Men are old Acquaintance with the Covenants of Promise, yet forsake their own Mercy, contemptuously undervalue the Promise, and the Adoption. Does not every *Civilian* know, and how could our Author be ignorant, that a Title is conveyed by *Adoption*, and Rights and Privileges acquired by that Favour, to which there could be no Pretence form'd without it, by those more especially, who disdain the Adoption and the easy Conditions thereof? And is not an *adoptive* Father, upon Account of those Advantages of *well-being*, to be preferr'd to a natural Father? Which shews that we are more beholden to God in Christ *redeeming* us, than to God in Christ creating us: And in perpetual Memory of the same, all taking their Name from the Family they are adopted into, are called *Christians*, and observe the *Lord's-Day*, instead of the Sabbath.

CHAP. Sabbath. By virtue of this Adoption and Covenant, God is said to be FAITHFUL and X. JUST to *forgive us our Sins*. But what Claim, what Right can they have to the Forgiveness of Sins, when it is impossible to have any manner of Assurance of it, without Covenant, or Adoption, or Promise, or Revelation? The natural Notions of the Justice of God are as strong a Demonstration that He will not forgive Sin without Punishment, as the natural Notions of his Goodness can be a Demonstration that He will. So that natural Fear, being equal to natural Hope, all Assurance must be suspended for ever, which is the same thing as to suspend Repentance and Obedience for ever. But that neither of them should be desperate, God has reveal'd the utmost Assurance of the other that is possible to be given, and has bound himself in *Covenant*, by *Promise*, by *Oath*, to give and grant it as a *Right* to those Penitents, who approach him in and through the Mediator.

If then they desire any certain Hope, or pretend to any Right, they must embrace the Covenant, and repair to the Promise, and to the Record or Revelation thereof, the Gospel; which will still be no Benefit to them, but by their believing in *Christ*, as well as in God; and by so doing, will bring them in all Benefits and Blessings their sinful Nature can desire, or is capable of. Is not *promised* Mercy more friendly, and to be depended upon, than no Promise, and nothing but Presumption to go upon?

THEREFORE Christianity excels natural Religion, as to Pardon of Sin, as much as certain assured Knowledge exceeds Hope, which is the most the Heathen World could collect with all their

their Reasoning. How absurd is it for a *Stranger* CHAP. or *Foreigner* amongst us, to pretend to a Claim of Inheritance, or Right of Purchasing; whilst he renounces the Wisdom of the Government, and his Consent to the Laws, so far, as not to desire to be naturaliz'd, become a *Denizon*, and *Member* of the Society? And therefore that Position * in the *Religion of Nature delineated*, "Certainly that *Respect* or Relation which lies between God, consider'd as an *unchangeable* Being, and *one* that is humble and supplicates, and endeavours to qualify himself for Mercy, cannot be the same with that, which lies between the same *unchangeable* God, and *one* that is obstinate, and will not supplicate, or endeavour to qualify himself," is truest in a Heathen Country; it can be no farther true in a Christian Society, than as the Endeavours to *qualify* oneself bear respect to the *Terms* and *Conditions* expressly necessary in the Christian Covenant, for qualifying oneself for Mercy.

GUESSES and Wishes, in lieu of Covenant and Engagements, are but a poor Support to a miserable Sinner. And if Repentance itself could be a sufficient Atonement for Sin, as it is a Passion, the Devils by repenting and sorrowing might be capable of Pardon; but all the Virtue that is in it for obtaining Pardon, is derived from the Covenant of Mercy made and declared in *Christ Jesus*. The Devils are excluded out of the Covenant, by the Act of God; and these wretched Men exclude themselves; and without Repentance and turning to the *Lord*, are in Danger of falling into *their* Condemnation. For the

* Page 115.

CHAP. X. *rational* Moiety of a Man, by the Instigations of spiritual Pride and Opiniatry, (different from what they ridicule by the Name of *carnal* Reason) is as liable to deviate into a *Devil* hereafter; as the *animal* Moiety, for Want of Regulation, is apt to degenerate into a *Brute* here.

OUR Author * has an unlucky Observation "That Superstition is the peculiar Foible of Mankind," which happens to be brought home to his own Door, with respect to false Notions of the Goodness of God; though he so incessantly declaims against Superstition, yet is he at the same time manifestly guilty of it himself. For if Superstition consists in having such wrong Notions of any of the Attributes of God, as are detrimental to ourselves, and others, in that Service of God, which his Truth, or true Notions of his Perfections, offer to our Reason, and require at our Hands; he is a palpable Offender against the Goodness of God, by way of Works of Supererrogation; therewith he would swallow up the Justice, Wisdom, and other Attributes of the Deity.

THE Deists riot in the Argument of Divine Goodness, to that Degree of Wantonness and Superstition, as to demolish all his other moral Perfections, as a *Governor*, and cut the Sinews of his Divine Government asunder. Their Notion of Goodness banishes all other Perfections from the Divine Nature, and is palpably and demonstratively inconsistent with Divine Dominion: Yet Sir *Isaac Newton*, and all Philosophers agree that *God* is a Relative Word, implies *Dominion*,

and has Relation to Subjects and Servants: CHAP. X. And that true Religion consists in maintaining a just Balance and Equilibrium amongst all the Attributes of God. Forasmuch as they don't govern our World in their Turns; but all in one joint, most amazing, and yet most adorable Majesty; infinitely more resplendent than all the Constellations of Heaven: there is no Limitation of any one of them by another, but what makes for the Glory of all the rest; as the Goodness of God by his Wisdom; and his Justice, by both the other; and all together constitute the *Divine Reason* of the most perfect Rector of the Universe. Mercy and Goodness never act without the Wisdom of Justice, nor Justice without the Wisdom of Mercy, in governing his Creature Man. They match together, and kiss each other, in saluting Man with the Mediatorial Method of forgiving Sin.

IF the Wisdom of God has been pleased to limit his governing Goodness, and nothing else can set Limits to Him but himself, within the Boundaries of a *covenanted* Dispensation, and confine its Exercise to the Channels of *Revelation* that flow from himself towards those who partake of them, that he might remember what he is to give and grant, and Men may know what they are to expect; this confirms their Faith, regulates their Hope, prevents Presumption, and secures Obedience. But for any, who have those admirably wise Overtures purposely limited and adjusted to the Nature of Man, to do him the more Good, to pretend to stretch and exalt that same Goodness beyond the Bounds of his own setting, is a *flattering* of God; or rather, as all Flattery is, a *mocking* him, as if He was incapable

CHAP. X. ble of Resentment or Dishonour, at the Violation of the Laws; or, would however presently be pacified in his short Anger, with a Shew of Repentance or imperfect Amendment. This is a superstitious and most ruinous Presumption, a fighting against the rest of the Divine Attributes under the Banner of his Goodness; and under the Umbrage of that, attempting to pull him out of his Throne, from being any longer Ruler and Governor over us.

GOODNESS in a Governor, dispens'd without Discretion and Wisdom, is no more than a foolish, contemptible good Nature, and as little to be fear'd; fit for nothing but to make Subjects more insolent and audacious. I remember in our *English* History two *Earls* give that Reason for murdering one of the *Saxon* Kings*, "because say they, he was so gentle and good-natured as to forgive every Body that offended him, without Distinction."

THE not considering God as a Governor, nor measuring his *Goodness* by the Standard of the best Governor we can conceive, or wish in Reason, to have over us, as long as we are subject to his Laws, is the Occasion of so many palpable Mistakes about the Divine Goodness, which the *Deists* are notoriously guilty of.

PARTICULARLY the following in the *Author* of *Characteristicks*, "Is the doing good for Glory's Sake so Divine a Thing? Or is it not diviner, to do good, even where it may be thought inglorious, even to the ungrateful,

* *Osney* King of *Northumberland*, Vid. *Eschard*.

"and

CHAP. X. "and to those who are wholly insensible of the Good they receive? How comes it then, that what is so *Divine* in us, should lose its Character in the *Divine Being*? And that according as the *Deity* is represented to us, he should more resemble the weak, womanish, and impotent Part of our Nature, than the generous, manly, and divine *."

"Now, if there be really something previous to Revelation, some antecedent Demonstration of Reason to assure us that God is, and withal, so good as not to deceive us; the same Reason, if we will trust to it, will demonstrate to us, that God is so good as to exceed the very best of us in *Goodness*. And after this Manner we can have no Dread or Suspicion to render us uneasy; for it is *Malice* only, and not *Goodness*, which can make us afraid."—"There can be no *Malice* but where Interests are opposed, a universal Being can have no Interest opposite, and therefore can have no *Malice* †. The highest *Goodness* must of Necessity belong to him, without any of those Defects of Passion, those Meanesses and Imperfections which we acknowledge such in ourselves, which, as good Men, we endeavour all we can to be superior to, and which we find we every Day conquer as we grow better ‡."

"We must be in the best of Humours,—to understand well what that *true Goodness* is, and what those Attributes imply which we ascribe with so much Applause and Honour to the *Deity*, we shall then be able to see better, whether

* *Vol. I. page 38.*

† *Page 39.*

‡ *Page 40, 41.*

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X

those

CHAP. X. "those Forms of Justice, those Degrees of Punishment, that Temper of Resentment, and those Measures of Offence and Indignation, which we vulgarly suppose in God, are suitable to those original Ideas of Goodness, which the same divine Being has imprinted in us.—This is the Security against all Superstition; to remember that there is nothing in God but what is *Godlike*; he is either *not at all*, or truly and perfectly good *."

THE noble Author draws all his Foils and Comparisons of Goodness for Illustration of the Divine, from our *private* Sentiments and Transactions with one another; had he drawn them from the Goodness of any *Sovereign*, in his Capacity of governing according to Law, and the best Advantage of the Community, as God is represented in the Holy Scripture; (and such Representations of his *relative, governing* Goodness are generally laid aside, and declined by them, since they have declined Revelation) those Notions of *Malice* would have dropp'd; and some *Form of Justice, Degrees of Punishment, Temper of Resentment, and Measure of Offence and Indignation*, though vulgarly supposed in him, would be found not only compatible with, but *necessary* to the Exercise of the Divine Goodness; and to be attributed with Honour and Applause to the Deity, as Instances of *true Goodness* in the Judgment of all wise Men; and as Ornaments, rather than any Diminution to the *Goodness* of our heavenly Governor.

INFINITE are the Errors and Wickednesses that spontaneously flow from false Notions of

* Page 33.

God's

God's Goodness, in this Extreme. I shall mention but one or two more, they belong to this Subject, and are of the utmost Concern to be rightly apprized of the same.

THE Deists rejecting Revelation, the only true Boundaries of our Opinion of this Attribute, unavoidably run into many fanciful Mistakes of this Sort, through that insufficient Guide of Reason they so totally and contentedly rely upon. They undoubtedly flatter, and promise themselves, that Repentance and Amendment, in their Way, will assuredly entitle them to eternal Life in Heaven. But in the Faculty of that Reason they depend upon, there is no *Proportion* to be found between the inconceivably great Happiness of *eternal Life*, and an entire, uninterrupted Course of Virtue in this *short* Life; much less the well known, and unavoidably many Imperfections of Obedience. No; eternal Happiness in Heaven is the *Gift* of God in *Christ*, not a necessary Consequence of Virtue, nor *naturally* due unto it. The Reward being so stupendously greater than the Work, there is no natural Justice in it; it would be Presumption in us so much as to hope for it, if there had not been a *Promise* of it, from the most superabounding Grace of God in Christ Jesus, who is the *Lord* of that Gift, and of all our Hopes.

AND has not He the Right, in common with every Benefactor, of prescribing the Terms and Conditions of his own Favour? And when He requires the believing on him *as such*, is it not the most unreasonable Thing in the World to refuse it, when the eternal Inheritance to be given

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DEISM DELINEATED.

given is of his *own purchasing*? The Apostle * offering to describe the Value of this Favour, labours under the Loss of Expression, καὶ ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν, immeasurably *hyperbolical, supernatural*; so ponderous a Weight of Glory as to outweigh this whole World of ours with all its Glories, Riches, and Jewels. The Glories of Heaven are so inconceivably august, that all the *Hyperboles* of human Language falter and fall short of describing the thousandth Part; by *Hyperboles* we are able to magnify all the *little Things* of this World, but that Assistance rather helps to diminish the other as to any full comprehension; they are to be the eternal *Admiration* of the Possessor! If present Light gives the Enjoyment of this admirable World, what new Worlds may not be expected to be enjoy'd in that *Light of God*, wherein we are to receive *New Light*, with new molded Appetites for Enjoyment? Light was the first Garment God appeared in to our World; but God is as much above Light, as Light is above Darknefs. How should he expect to succeed in describing, what he acknowledges elsewhere, to be great and glorious beyond Conception; *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor hath it enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive, the Things which God has prepared for those that love him* †. And he represents the Love of Christ condescending to advance us to it, in the most exalted Strain of Expression; That we *may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the Love of Christ which passeth Knowledge* ‡.

* 2 Cor. iv. 17. † 1 Cor. ii. 9. ‡ Eph. iii. 19.

BUT

DEISM DELINEATED.

BUT great as it is, and as much above our present Comprehension, as it is our Deserts, God in Christ has *bound* himself by Covenant, and Promise, to confer this unspeakable Gift upon our poor Services; and upon the due Performance of the Conditions on our Part; we have a Right to claim, and the Mediator, who is the constituted Judge of our Behaviour, has a Right to oblige Him to the Performance, if there could possibly be any Scruple in the Case. *Whatsoever you shall ask in my Name, THAT WILL I DO, that the Father may be glorified in the Son*, John xiv. 13.

AND if this is the glorious and comfortable Effect of what the Mediator has done, and suffer'd for us; whither should the Lovers, or Pretenders to the Hopes of eternal Life resort, but to Him *who has the Words of it*; and the Gift of it moreover at his own Disposal? He has mercifully disposed of the Words of it to us, in hopes we will be so wise, as to qualify ourselves for the Gift. But what Right, what Claim, what Shadow of Pretence can these *Covenant-baters*, and consequently *Out-Laws* before God, these *Naturalists* in Religion, form to themselves of this invaluable Enjoyment after Death?

SEEING then that Heaven and eternal Happiness there, is not the *Due* of Man, but the *Gift* of God; the Doctrine of the *Stoicks*, espoused by the *modern* Deists, which makes eternal Happiness attend upon Virtue by a *natural and eternal Necessity*, must be false; because it is founded upon two Falshoods and Repugnancies to the Nature of Things. 1. It supposes *Merit* in Man,

X 3 whereby

CHAP. X. whereby he may assume to claim of God, by a natural Right, without any Thanks to him.
 2. It supposes Man's *Independency* upon him (the Root of all Irreligion) that he is *sufficient* for his own Happiness without him, needing nothing from his *Grace* and *Favour*; not so much as that of his *Promise* and *Covenant*, which are never made in Justice or Debt to Man, but always in *unmerited Grace* and *Favour* towards him; and as often as Man complies with the Terms, kept afterwards with inviolable, claimable *Justice*; which the Deists, refusing his *Covenant*, have no more to do with, than with his *Grace*.

THOUGH they may assure themselves, *their Labour* would never prove vain *in the Lord*, if they will receive Him for their Mediator and Lord—But as they will be beholden to nothing that he has done for them, and continue to reject the most Divine Counsel, and the most beneficent and sublime Reason of God's superlative Goodness exhibited in him, their Hopes can be little better than Castles in the Air; or rather a presumptuous Building a Tower on Earth to reach up to Heaven, that they may clamber thither in their own Way, whilst they pull down and overturn the common prescribed Method; as if they could climb to force the Angel that guards it, and steal the Tree of Life from the God of Heaven, to plant it in their thorny Field of Nature?

IF they discard the Merits of Christ, they must set up *their own*; and so by throwing him out of their Faith, become guilty of the most horrible Arrogance, with the *Papists*, that is incident to a *Creature*; an Arrogance against Heaven, which none

CHAP. X. none that ever were in Heaven durst ever think of, except the *fallen Angels*; and what was their Loss of that Place, but the indulging themselves in such Thoughts? Yet our Author, as a *Deist*, pretends to *merit* of God beyond *Papists* themselves. His Words are these, *page 332, 333*.
 "Can he, who does a thing to avoid being punished, or in Hopes of being rewarded hereafter; and for the same Reason is ready to do the contrary; *merit*, at least, equally with him, who is in Love with his Duty, and is govern'd, not by servile Motives, but by the original Obligation of the moral Fitness of Things; in Conformity to the Nature, and in Imitation of the perfect Will of God? They who do not act thus, deserve not the Title of *true Deists*."

ARE not they guilty, at the same time, of a Breach of one of the primary Laws of Nature, *Self-Preservation*, when they might, but won't be saved? What Enemies to themselves, and to Mankind, to go about to banish the assurance of such a Hope out of the world? It is taking away a Life from the world more precious than its present Life, which is, or ought to be, the very Life of that life.

THE Author of *Characteristicks* professes that our Conceptions of the Deity depend upon the *Humour* we are in, *i. e.* the Temper and Disposition of Man's Mind. Now what can procure or produce this best of Humour like a *settled* Covenant between God and Man? This assuredly puts every Man's Happiness into his own Power, having the Power of performing the Conditions. This cures all Excesses of his Passion for himself

CHAP. X. either rising to Presumption, or sinking into Despair, by curing all false Notions both of the Goodness, and Severity of God: The Promises of the Covenant are an Antidote against one, and the Threatnings against the other.

AND will they still slavishly stick to the Law of Works, that Law written in their Hearts, whilst their Heart fails them, and their Conscience daily accuses them for not keeping up to it? And still find in their Heart not to receive the second and better Covenant there? When it would put *their* Law of Nature farther into their inward Parts, and, in order to conquer that evil Heart of Unbelief, endear itself to their Judgment and Affections, under the Circumstances of being merciful to their Unrighteousness, and remembering their Sins and Iniquities no more; and of the Yoke being render'd easy, and the Burthen light, through the Lord and Mediator of that Covenant; wherein there is promised Pardon for their Sins, and the Assistance of the Holy Ghost to help their Infirmities, and Life eternal for asking for, and the Sincerity of their best Endeavours accepted of in lieu of perfect Obedience: for the Uprightness and Perfection of Man's Obedience to the same, is declared in the renewal of that Covenant, or original Promise to *Abraham*, to consist in *Sincerity* according to the Margin, *Gen. xvii. 1.* Though in that Covenant we convey no other Right to God than what he had a Claim to before, *viz.* the best Obedience of our Lives, yet for the better Security of that Obedience, it operates upon us with the Force of a *double* Obligation; that of God's Commandments, and that also which arises from the *Honour* of keeping the Faith of a Covenant

we voluntarily obliged ourselves in. A Covenant; CHAP. X. wherein they may enter into the most happy, most honourable, most priviledg'd State of mutual Contract with the Maker of Heaven and Earth, for the greatest Benefits their Nature is capable of, and upon Terms easy to be perform'd by their Frailties.

WHEREAS in their State of Nature, there is no *mutual* Obligation at all between God and Man, all the Weight of the Obligation lies upon Man; and no corresponding Obligation from God; who binds himself in no Promise or Stipulation, because Man refuses to be bound by any *foederal* Right on his Part, to his own Happiness; and to accept Him for their God, in the Way only that he will at all be their God, or they can be his People. Can that be an equitable, or a tolerable Notion of the Goodness of God, which would make those equal in its Respects, whose moral Actions and Behaviour towards Him, are unequal, by slighting the Conditions of his Goodness? If it is morally certain from the Divine Goodness, that he would, at some certain Time and Place, *reveal* some Remedy to Man's Misery, and some Restoration to his Happiness; to enquire not after that reveal'd Will and Goodness of God, but spurn at the Offers of it, must be a most provoking, *immoral* Disobedience. Yet they despise the Revelation he has been pleas'd to make; though it is as true, and as comfortable in Belief, for their Life here, and for their Hopes hereafter, as is the Being of God itself.

FOR it gives them the true Knowledge of God, and of Themselves; without which, one is as

as nothing, comparatively speaking, to the other. In Defiance of which they set up an *imaginary* Relation between as fanciful a Goodness of God and themselves; controuling and directing that to be, what it really is not, with respect to them; and to increase their own Rejection, making themselves to be what they really are not.

It is not sufficient to consider the Goodness of God as the Author of our Beings and our Blessings, unless we consider our Relation to him likewise, as our Divine *Law-giver* and *Governor*; what he requires from our Behaviour, to please him, and what he forbids under the Penalty of his Displeasure; and in that Case to separate Justice from his Goodness, is to make him an Idol of our own Fancy, no God, no *Governor* over us; and ourselves, though his Creatures, daily preserv'd and oblig'd, yet not *accountable* to him for our Actions. From two Premises both of their own erecting, with respect to God's Goodness, and their own Sufficiency, and both fundamentally erroneous, what System for their Salvation can follow, but Self-deceit and Self-destruction; if God of his infinite Mercy does not open their Eyes, to let them see, and forsake their own Delusion?

Does he not know Himself, and them, much better than they can pretend either to know Him, or themselves? In order to give them, boasting themselves of the reverse, a due Sense of themselves, and take down that proud swelling Sufficiency, as of themselves, they ought to consider that they are *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, and without Him can do nothing*. That God can do for them what they

they cannot do of themselves, enlighten, and enrich them, and make them very happy with Himself, provided they will submit to his Directions. He who is ignorant, but knows his own Ignorance, (as was the Case of the ancient Philosophers) is far wiser, and more compassionate by the Deity, than he, who having received the Heavenly Instruction, with all the Treasures of Divine Wisdom and Goodness, for making him good; thinks himself wiser and better, than to put it to any other Use, but to rend those who lay such Pearl before him.

Is it fitting they should deal as boldly by his Goodness as they do by his Justice? drawing upon it great Sums of Favour and Bounty; on all their Occasions, and without Leave, claiming a Title hereafter to an happy Immortality, and escape from Punishments, as a Matter of Right; though they have no Promise, though it is in Derision of the Methods God has appointed them to claim under. Never considering that Favour and Goodness is a *free* Thing in all its Dispensations, where it is unconfined by Covenant. Would they acknowledge and embrace it, in that Way of Covenant, they have indeed a just Claim to it; but as long as they wilfully disdain the Covenant, and the Condition thereof, Justice forbids them any Benefit of it.

They think it is no Injustice in God to pardon Sin in their Way, and therefore depend upon him for it: By which, they fondly mean, it would be no Injustice or Injury to *themselves* to receive his Pardon and Favour. But have they any just Claim to it? If not, they are guilty of Injustice against God in entertaining such an unjusti-

CHAP. X. *fi*able Hope against the Reason of all Hope. Is it not undeniable Justice in God so far to regard the Terms and Conditions of his own Favour, as to debar them from it, who wilfully reject the other? Our Author * assigns the Cause of our Happiness being limited, because our Reason is so: God alone has unlimited Reason and Happiness. If then our Reason is limited, and consequently our Happiness, why so inconsistent, as not to allow God's superior Reason to direct us to our greatest Happiness; and not accept of his Revelation, in the Use of our Reason, as our only Pilot to Heaven? Since the *written Word and Reason* of God in the Use of our Faculties, is a sure and steadfast Guide, in all Necessaries; whilst the unwritten Reason that comes from him, on Account of promiscuous Ignorance, Vagrancy, and Unsettledness, refusing to consult the only Pilot, the *living Way*, that came from thence, must ever rove with random Fluctuation in the wide Ocean of Nature, neglected, unpity'd by Heaven; or should they arrive by the Prerogative of a Supposition at that Coast, the Coast thereof would know them not.

THE like ungrounded, fond Notion of the Goodness of God, wherein they superstitiously indulge themselves, seduces them into a Disregard, if not utter Disbelief of any *positive* future Punishments, in another Life. But Laws without the Sanction of Punishment annexed would be no more than so many Intreaties of the Sovereign Power, promulg'd to its respective Subjects; having no Power to command, and without any Prospect of being obey'd. Or, if Pu-

* Page 20.

nishment

nishment was annex'd and threaten'd, but not CHAP. X. put in Execution, it would have the same Effect. Every Iniquity would be encouraged that could disturb the Enjoyment, or threaten the Dissolution of the Community; and the sovereign Authority would become guilty of those Crimes it took no Care to restrain. There is an Account of one, who, "having begg'd for a Pardon of the King of France for the *Seventh* Murder he was guilty of, and finding he could not obtain it, boldly told the King, that he would own only the *first* Murder to be his own proper *Action*; and that the *Imputation* of all the rest must lie upon the King himself; for that he should never have committed the other, if the King had not given him *Encouragement*, by pardoning the *first*."

As there are more disposed to be wicked than good, in all Governments; not only the Commination of Pains and Penalties, but the due *Execution* of them, must ever continue the principal Sanction of Law, as that will ever be the Nerves and Support of the Governor's Authority. It is that only obtains the true End of Punishment; which is to be a *Terror to evil Doers*. Infliction of Evil has greater Force and Power over Mens Minds, than Hope of Reward; because the first makes their present Condition worse, which is a dreadful Thing; whilst the other serves only to better it, which will operate the less, the more they are contented with it.

THAT Punishment, which is for Correction and Amendment of the Offender, is not remitted or abated by what *Christ* suffer'd for us; for that Rod still continues in the Hand of our loving

CHAP. X. ing Father to be used upon Occasion of doing us good. It was only needful to take away that which proceedeth from his *Wrath*, and, after a sufficient Probation of us, is final and never ceasing, and to be pronounced upon the incorrigible by the Mouth of *Goodness* itself. They who are wise to escape it, will see so much Wisdom and Love for the *publick Good*, in inflicting it, that they will not have the least Grief or Regret for the eternal Loss and Suffering of their nearest Relation here; but remain convinc'd, that as Rewards and Punishments are essential to the heavenly Governor, he maintains his Character of *Goodness*, in rewarding above, and punishing less than Desert.

SEEING the Punishment of Vice, which ariseth ordinarily out of the natural Consequences of Things, called the *natural* Punishment or Inconvenience of it, is frequently postpon'd, and the natural Tendency of such a Cause often interrupted, and the Effects no less frequently eluded in this Life; and considering Wickedness and Vice are prosperous, merry and triumphant, and fall into no Misfortune like other Men; the natural notions Men have, by common reasoning upon the Divine Rectitude, the essential Justice of God, as a *Governor*, so necessary to limit his Goodness, at one Time or other; have every where agreed as in a common Dictate of Reason, to believe some *positive* Retributions *hereafter*, some certain *legal* Consequences of Vice, upon every Sinner according to his Deservings.

IF then the Persuasion of future *positive, legal* Punishments is as necessary in the Belief of natural Religion, as that God is *Governor* and *Judge* of

of human Actions; Why does our Author * fall CHAP. X. out with Revelation, for making that still more certain; and for making it what it ought to be, more effectual, by representing it as *endless*? Whilst he would have all future *positive* Punishment, (as well in Contradiction to natural, as reveal'd Religion) to be "Cruelty, Malice, "Spite, Wrath, Revenge:" No; they won't bear to hear of any Punishment sufficiently certain, and sufficiently great, to be a counterbalance to the Desires and Temptations to Sin, in this Life. But God, who knows the Nature whereof we are made better than these Men, and without ever consulting them, any farther, than they will please to consult their own Breast, whether the Fear of such Evil is not the first Wisdom of our Nature, has therefore made the *Fear of himself the beginning of Wisdom*, and to depart from Sin and Evil, to be their *first* Understanding.

HE lays hold of that powerful Principle of *Self-Preservation* within us, to oblige us, by any Means, to be good, wise, and happy; and, if the Love of Goodness, Wisdom, and Happiness can't prevail, (as they can't possibly in the Nature of Things at first, over habitual Sinners) to drive us into that Good he intends for us, and compel us to come in, through Fear of the dread Punishments of the contrary Practices. Therefore has he in his great Wisdom and Goodness, positively acquainted us with those endless unendurable Torments, to rouse us out of that desperate Inconsideration and Lethargy, Infatuation and Insensibility, which are incident to an Habit

* Page 35, 36.

CHAP. of sinning. That since the impenitent Sinner
 X. must one Day suffer them in *reality*, he might
 every Day think of, and suffer them in his *Thoughts*,
 till the Pain thereof changes the Course of his
 Life; and then, in a few Days, he will surely
 turn and repent, and precipitate himself into Vir-
 tue and Happiness, taking Sanctuary in the Fear
 of God, in order to rejoice in the Arms of his
 Favour. Not as if originally ordain'd for Man,
 for that would be to ordain Punishment before
 he had sinned, but *prepared for the Devil and his*
Angels: Therefore a meet Doom and suitable
 Society for all those, who wilfully forsake God,
 and follow their Example. If the Pride of think-
 ing better of their natural Capacity, and Endow-
 ments, than they deserv'd; if the not acknow-
 ledging the Receipt of them to him, and to a
 full Contentment with the Divine Dispensations;
 if the thinking so highly of their own Reason and
 Sufficiency, as to set them upon arguing with
 the most High, for a higher Station than they
 were placed in, was their Ruin, others had Need
 to stand in Fear.

AND the Reason our Author there alledges
 against such Punishments, viz. "Because God
 "in doing Acts of Justice, acts purely for the
 "Good of his Creatures," is the very Reason
 why in his great Goodness, he both threatens
 and inflicts those great Punishments. So shallow
 a *Civilian* was he in reasoning upon Law and
 Punishment. For, if the Laws of God were cer-
 tainly fram'd for our Good, as Directions and
 Qualifications for bringing us to Heaven; the
 more severe the Punishments annex'd for effec-
 tually deterring from Disobedience, the more he
 demonstrates himself to be intent upon and de-
 sirous

CHAP. of our *Good*; that we may not find it, upon
 X. the Balance of the Account, agreeable to any
 Part, or Passion of our Nature, to disappoint him
 of his Design of bringing us to Happiness, and
 to Himself. *For so much then* (says the Book of
Wisd. xii. 15.) *as thou art righteous thyself, thou*
orderest all Things righteously; thinking it not agree-
able with thy Power to condemn him who hath not
deserv'd to be punish'd.

THEREFORE he would have us pause and
 consider, when a Temptation offers; whether
 the Pleasures of Sin which are but for a Season,
 though they have the Charms of being present,
 or being secret, or being some new Taste of Sin,
 if they must become Remorse and Bitterness in
 the long after-feeling of the Mind in its Repent-
 ance for complying; and without that, terminate
 in the *Worm of Conscience that never dies, and the*
Fire that never shall be quench'd; whether the pre-
 carious Moment of Life with all its sinful, sickly
 Enjoyments ought to be preferr'd to a never-
 ending Eternity of Torture uninterrupted and
 Anguish unsupportable, that will come, and will
 not tarry! Or whether the sober Thought of such
 an impending Danger ought not to be terrible
 and tremendous in its Caution, never to repeat
 the same Folly of sinning, as in its Consequence
 it is unspeakable in the Endurance: Or whether,
 for that Reason, because there is no Proportion
 between eternal Suffering, and the vicious Plea-
 sures of a short Life, the Deceitfulness of Sin
 ought not immediately to be compelled to own
 the Cheat, in Presence of that Dissuasion of God,
 and the true Nature of his Government! Pur-
 posely in Grace and Mercy publish'd and impart-
 ed, as the strongest Bitt and Bridle, that can pos-
 sibly

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CHAP. X. *fibly* be used for curbing the headstrong Will, and putting a Stop to habitual Sin! And, if it has not that Effect, whether Reason can deny it to be a just Bargain of Vengeance deliver'd, for the infinite Folly of rejecting the eternal Pleasures of Heaven; which courted all the Day of Life, and will assuredly be as commensurate to the Immortality of the Soul, as the other Endurance must be parallel to its Existence.

PLATO in *Phædon*, brings in *Socrates*, declaring, "That those whose Sins are incurable, and have been guilty of Sacrilege or Murder, or such Crimes, are by a just and fatal Destiny, thrown headlong into *Tartarus*, where they are kept Prisoners for ever." *Rep. lx.* he observes, "that at the Time of the future Judgment, good Men shall be at the Right-Hand of God, and the Wicked at the Left, from whence they shall be thrown down into the *Abyss*, and into outward Darknes, bound Hand and Foot;" where they shall be tormented, and torn by Spirits, which he calls Fire, and where nothing shall be heard but horrible groaning and howling.

THIS being a Separation from all that Happiness, which was the proposed End of Man's coming first into this mortal Life, is called the *second* Death; as the Separation of Soul and Body, the End of all Temporal Happiness, is his *first* Death. And if there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin after the first Death, and the guilty Remorse inseparably adheres to the Soul, and that Soul is *naturally* immortal; it follows from the Deist's own Concession of the Punishment of Sin by *natural Consequence*, that it must be

be as durable as the Soul. Temporal Punishments CHAP. X. from God, are medicinal and therefore remissible; but both by the Tenor of the Sentence, and the Nature of Things, (supposing no Annihilation, which is a groundless Hope) there must be a State of endless *Despair* in eternal Banishment from all Happiness, from any more Hope of Probation, in Company of the Devil and his Angels, who have despair'd ever since their Fall. And that Despair of Pardon and Felicity has been the Cause of their incessant Malice against Souls; which accumulates their Guilt, and ripens them for that everlasting Fire prepared for them; where the Tempter and Tempted will burn with tormenting Rage against God, and one another, for evermore.

If the undone Reason of the Sufferer will not acquit the Goodness of God, the Reason of every Body else must plainly acknowledge the Fitness of that Infliction upon the incorrigible Sinner, and the Justice of that Punishment from the heavenly Governor upon *some* wilful and ungovernable Persons of the Society. For, since the previous Acquaintance of it could not accomplish its ardent Desire of saving all from eternal Woe and Ruin, the actual Infliction of it will be justify'd, if not out of Mercy and Kindness to the Sufferer, (who has render'd himself incurable, and *incapable* of any) still out of superior loving Kindness to the *Community*; and the Author of *Characteristicks*, Vol. I. p. 39. an inconsistent Adversary to these true Sentiments, maintains "the Interest or Good of the *Whole*, must be the Interest of the universal Being, and that he can have no other," that since they beforehand knew this very Judgment of God, and knew that their thinking him to be *Austere* in threatening it,

CHAP. X. would be only the *condemning themselves out of their own Mouth*; if it lost its Aim and Intention in doing good to themselves, in timely redeeming the mis-spent Time of a former Conversation, through the Influence and Dread of that Terror of the Lord for working out their own Salvation; it will for ever and ever serve to do good unto others; by becoming a Monument of Vengeance for confirming the Righteous more sure and steadfast in their State of Glory, as *Beacons* about the immense Ocean of Futurity, for keeping others steady and undeviating in their Course. And because the Happiness of one is intended to be everlasting, for the better securing of that, the Misery of the other is ordained to be as lasting.

FOR it is reasonable to think, that as their free Will was conducted to Heaven by the Influence of rational Motives; so still remaining a *mutable* free Will, like the Angels*, it is capable of being confirmed more and more in its Choice, by Experience, and by the ever-operating Strength of such righteous Examples of God's Displeasure. There being many Passages in Scripture, exempting the Righteous hereafter from Sorrow, Pain and Labour; but not one that insures them from a *Possibility* of sinning any more. They are but finitely perfect, and consequently peccable, *capable* of sinning, though removed many Degrees from proneness to it. Heaven or the true Riches, according to our Lord's Representation, *Luke xvi. 10, 11.* Seems to be committed as a Trust of Faithfulness, and a *new* State of Probation, being a Place of new and better Righteousness, *He that is faithful in a little,* in the

* *Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.* Milt.
present

present State of Probation, *is* and will be *faithful* CHAP. X. *also* in the *MUCH* committed to him hereafter; *and be that is unfaithful or unjust in a little now,* would be the same in futurity, should the *MUCH* be, what it never can be, committed to him. Doctor *Whitby* observes of the Spirits of just Men made *perfect*, *Heb. xii. 23.* that it signifies either that they had fulfill'd their Course, and so rested from their Labours and Conflicts; or to be perfectly purg'd from all *Guilt* of Sin, and so fitted to be admitted to this Kingdom. If we examine into the Use of the *Tree of Life hereafter*, we shall find it *is for an Ointment of sweet Savour* to them that eat it, *they shall neither labour nor be weary,* *2 Esd. ii. 12. Rev. ii. 7. xxii. 2, 14.* And as the Fall and Punishment of Angels is the Confirmation of other Angels in their happy State; so the eternal Punishment of wicked Men will be the eternal Establishment of the Righteous in Glory; and both may continue eternal Monuments of Disobedience, and Divine Displeasure, perhaps, to many other Systems of intelligent Agents created to Probation in *Body* of some Sort, supposing a *spiritual* Body according to the Distinction of the Apostle, which seems to mean super-elemental Body, very different from our elemental kind of Body.

THE Number of unhappy Sufferers may be no more to the other *Systems* of rational Agents, than the Executions at *Tyburn* are to the Cities of *London* and *Westminster*. And if the good Government of those Cities find it necessary to make those Examples, as a *Terror to others* against opposing the Government, and breaking the Laws of Order and Enjoyment, Why may not the eternal Governor of the *Great City*, whose Builder and

Maker is God, governing rational free Agents, according to their Nature, make eternal Examples of some, *to the Terror of others*, who might have chosen Obedience and Happiness, and were assisted in the Choice; and yet wilfully preferred Rebellion to his Laws, and Opposition to his most wise Administration to general Happiness; and still, notwithstanding those Instances of Displeasure, preserve, and, with more accumulated Respect as a Governor, fix his Character of *Optimus Maximus*? For *Mercy and Wrath* consist with the best and greatest Governor, and *to be mighty to forgive, and to pour out Displeasure*, is his Character and Station, *Ecclus. xvi. 11.* or in the Words of King Manasses, *thine angry Threatnings towards Sinners is importable, but thy merciful Promise is unmeasurable and unsearchable.* Suppose there are ten Thousand, or ten Thousand times ten Thousand Arch-Angels, and that they are the *PRINCIPALITIES* over Powers, powerful Societies, *one* Arch-Angel the DEVIL with his Clan of Rebellious Angels, fallen and kept to the Judgment of the great Day, might be an eternal Beacon to all the Hosts of Angels. So the Sons of Perdition among the Children of Men, who make themselves Children and Imitators of that Apostate from God, may be a Terror, and yet be but few in Comparison of the innumerable Societies and Systems which may be influenced by their exemplary Punishment. Any other Notion of Hell, whether of the learned or unlearned, exclusive of Annihilation, (an absurdity in Philosophy) seems to be no other than a *Purgatory*, of a shorter or longer Duration. If there was any *Hope* in Hell, so much as the Hope of the Mercy of Annihilation, it would not be Hell. But then that hopeless State of the

damn'd,

damn'd, serves to this very good End of Wisdom, in confirming the happy in their Duty in Heaven; in raising their Gratitude to God for their Redemption; and the Sense of their own Joys to a higher Pitch.

Thus Justice and Mercy in the Divine Government, as well as in all other Governments, relate to different Subjects; Justice to private Persons is both Justice and Mercy to the Publick; the Good of the whole being evermore the Measure of the Good of every Person in particular; whatever is thus ordered for the Good of the whole, is best in Wisdom, best in Justice, best in Goodness for that whole. And though the Author of the *Characteristicks*, Vol. I. page 40. allows of no such Inference, yet it directly follows from his own Position. "If there be a general Mind, it can have no particular Interest: But the general Good, or Good of the Whole, and its own private Good, must of Necessity be one and the same. It can intend nothing besides, nor aim at any Thing beyond, nor be provoked to any Thing contrary. So that we have only to consider, whether there be really such a Thing as a *Mind which has relation to the whole*, or not. For if unhappily there be no *Mind*, we may comfort ourselves, however, that Nature has no Malice: If there be really a *Mind*, we may rest satisfied that it is the *best natur'd one in the World.*" That Mind may be, and is free from all Malice, and the best natur'd in the World, in the best Methods of Government, and this Punishment of the Wicked continue notwithstanding; because it implies no Imperfection in such a Governor. For Mercy and Pity in God has its *Time and Season*,

CHAP. X. and are not in him, as in ourselves, a Passion, but a Perfection of the highest Reason and Equity, becoming the best Government of the Universe. Nor is it any Defect of Goodness, much less Malice, to suffer those contumacious Subjects to be for ever miserable, who would never be prevailed with in their Life-time, to submit to the Government of their Maker, nor accept of a Pardon in their Redeemer, so as to qualify themselves for eternal Blessedness.

THOUGH it seems harsh and severe to our short Reason, circumscribed as it is within the Relations of few Things; yet in the large Reason of God, as large as are the Relations of the innumerable sorts of intelligent Creatures he has made, in whose Sight, and under whose Government the whole Universe of Worlds without End is but one Society, it is otherwise; it is benign and kind in the *Whole*. And if it proceed, as in truth it does, from his *Goodness*; the Goodness of the eternal Governor is a fix'd, immutable and eternal principle of Divine Action *à parte ante*, & *à parte post*.

THEIR petulant Objections and ungrounded Mistakes of the Goodness of the supreme Governor, contrary to the Nature of Government, and the Design of Punishment, led them willingly into the Disbelief of these Punishments, to excuse themselves from having any Regard to the Divine *Displeasure*; though they are no more than rectoral Effects and judicial Endurances flowing even from Goodness itself. Goodness unfear'd, and abused to Contempt, from the best Friend becomes the most exasperated Enemy. Besides, if the *penal* Evil, derived from this

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abused

CHAP. X. abused Goodness, was not *final* and *conclusive*, or not so great as represented in Scripture, what Occasion for God's waiting so long to be gracious, or for the Praises of long-suffering Mercy? God knows what will be the Event of his long suffering, but that has no more Effect upon the Election of the Will, than if he did not know it; the Man is indulged in longer Probation to lay up Wrath, or Blessing, at his own Choice. And, agreeably to the common Reason of all Men, and to the Nature and Design of capital final Punishment, being a *Terror to others*, to prevent in them a future Breach of the Law, the Good of the *Sufferer* is not intended by *that* Punishment, but, as a Mark of *publick Resentment*, the Good of the *Publick* only; because such Punishment from the Governor of Society, looks forward as well as backward, and consequently that the End of *such* Punishment is not solely the Amendment of the Sufferer, as our Author has falsely asserted. But as he there drops the Curtain, so I drop the Argument.

AND now, if according to the Test of our Author's own erecting, for judging what is true Religion, *viz. what makes most of the Honour of God, and the Good of Men*; it has appear'd by various Arguments, that it makes most for the Honour of God as a Governor, and the common Good of Men, the Society governed, that future Rewards and Punishments should be dispensed according to the covenanted Method revealed in the Gospel, and no otherwise, where it is sufficiently promulged, (especially since the Degrees of both will be proportioned to the respective Degrees of Obedience, and Disobedience, and distributed by the Hands of the *Mediator* of that Covenant,

CHAP. X. Covenant, the appointed Judge of our Behaviour; and if that Method of written Laws, Privileges, and Conditions, best ascertains the Knowledge of Obedience in all necessary Particulars, and the Expectation of the governed in all that can concern their Hopes, and Fears, to their unspeakable Comfort and Satisfaction, under that Divine Government; as well as to the singular Glory and Illustration of all the Divine Attributes, as will further appear afterwards. If the *contrary* Supposition of the *Goodness* of God, depreciates the Honour and Wisdom of the Divine Government; loosens the Bands of Obedience, and renders it precarious, and destitute of proper Assistance; and, in all due reasoning upon, and Experience of Law and Government for the Good of the Community, is false and superstitious; if it affords no Assurance of Remission of Sins to Repentance and Amendment grafted upon that Presumption, in Contempt of the revealed Method of ascertaining it; and if neither the Death of Christ as a bare Witness, and a mere Testimony that God is of a reconcilable Disposition to repenting Sinners; nor yet the Republication of the Law of Nature, are to be depended upon for Remission of Sins, and eternal Life: Then it follows, that *Deism*, in a Christian Country, is destitute of all Support of Reason, and rational Comfort; that it is absolutely false in its Foundation: And, 'tis to be hoped, upon serious Consideration of the same, it will from hence forward begin to die away at the Root, and revive no more amongst us.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of the PRIESTLY Office of our MEDIATOR upon Earth continued.

I Proceed to the *second* Thing proposed, to shew what is the Method laid down in Scripture, to be depended upon for Salvation, the Remission of Sins, and eternal Life: CHAP. XI.
 And that is the DEATH of the Mediator. He was to suffer Death not as a Martyr to the Truth of God's reconcilable Disposition to Sinners; that Disposition was evident enough in his appointing such a Person, and sending him into the World; but as the *Mediator* of the new Covenant, who by suffering in our Stead the Punishment due to our Sin, undertook to accomplish thereby an *actual, full, perfect* Reconciliation between God and Man. Thus it is represented. *For this Cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by Means of Death for the Redemption of the Transgressions that were under the first Testament, they which are called might receive the Promise of eternal Inheritance: For where a Testament is, there must also of Necessity be the Death of the Testator. For a Testament is of Force, after Men are dead, otherwise it is of no Strength at all while the Testator liveth*.* The

* *Heb. ix. 15, 16, 17.*

same

CHAP. XI. same Word which is translated *Testament*, in other Places signifies Covenant; which, according to *Whitby*, "as it was sealed with, and confirmed by his Blood, procuring for us such Blessings as he by his Will design'd for, and declared should be conferred upon Believers *through Faith in his Blood*, became also a *Testament*." But that the Word should every where be render'd *Covenant*, not *Testament*; and that there is no Necessity for translating it *Testament* even in this Place, in case *Testator* implies *Pacifier*, See *Peirce's* Notes.

As he was the Son of God who loved Righteousness and hated Iniquity against his Father, that induced him to undertake our Redemption from all Iniquity, and gain a new Probation, to make us a peculiar People zealous of good Works.

It became him to make the Captain of our Salvation *Perfect* through suffering, or tasting Death for every Man*. It does not say, there was no other Way possible for the Salvation of Sinners. But what is more to the Purpose, if that Method best BECAME the *Grace, Wisdom, and Power* of God, we may be very sure, it was in itself the *best, the wisest, and the most honourable* that could be pitch'd upon. For nothing but what is most Divine and Beneficial in Goodness, most sublime and adorable in Wisdom, most influential and awful in Legislature and Government, could become God to propose, or the Mediator to undertake, or Man to receive the Benefit of, in that Affair.

* Heb. ii. 9, 10.

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" I T is enough (in the Opinion of the impartial Mr. *Locke*) to justify the Fitness of any Thing to be done, by resolving it into the *Wisdom of God*, who has done it; whereof our narrow Understandings, and short Views, may utterly incapacitate us to judge. We know little of this visible, and nothing at all of the State of that intellectual World; wherein are infinite Numbers and Degrees of Spirits out of the Reach of our Ken or Guess; and therefore know not what Transactions there were between God and our Saviour, in Reference to his Kingdom. We know not what need there was to set up a Head and a Christan, in Opposition to the *Prince of this World, the Prince of the Power of the Air, &c.* And we shall take too much upon us, if we shall call God's Wisdom or Providence to Account, and pertly condemn for needless, all that our weak, and, perhaps, bias'd *Understandings*, cannot account for*." Yet, in this particular Case, the Wisdom and Goodness of God has shewn itself so visibly to common Apprehensions, that it hath furnish'd us abundantly wherewithal to satisfy the Curious and Inquisitive; who will not take a Blessing, unless they be instructed, what need they had of it, and why it was bestowed upon them†.

THE making the Captain of our Salvation *Perfect* through suffering Death, was, that which made him a *perfect* Mediator in Office, as he was before perfectly qualify'd in his Person and Nature to go through with it. And thus as the Law

* *Reasonableness* of Christian. page 255. † Page 256.

of

of God obliging to Obedience was wisely laid in the Nature and Reason of Things, so the Divine Method of pardoning Transgression and recovering to Obedience, through *this Mediator*, is likewise founded in the Nature and Fitness of Things; not discoverable indeed to our Reason, without the Help of Revelation: But when that open'd the Treasures of Wisdom and Mercy in saving Sinners; it, at the same Time, shews how perfectly well the Mediator consults the Nature of God, and the present Nature of Man, in erecting the best Kingdom and Government that can possibly subsist between them.

WHEREUNTO all that subject themselves by the Invitations of the most reasonable Faith in the Mediator, find Mercy and Justice, and all the Institutes and Appointments of Heaven, dispens'd not by arbitrary Will, but directed by the Measures of the highest Reason and Wisdom; the natural Inclinations, which Reason suggests, of the Divine Goodness to pardon penitent Sinners, reconciled to the natural Engagements of Justice, not to let Sin go unpunish'd, by a most surprizing Policy and Godlike Contrivance for the Good of Man, as much beyond the Capacity of his Reason to have found out, as it is beyond his Desert; wherein *Mercy and Truth, Righteousness and Peace* match'd together, and have *kissed each other*.

WHEREIN all that is in the Power and Nature of Man is superintended and directed to his greatest Comfort in this World, and to his endless Happiness in the next. His Reason exalted to a Coincidence with his Faith, and improved to the best Government over all his Faculties; his Pas-

sions regulated to the embracing the most amiable recompensing Good; and to the shunning the most seriously deform'd, and dreadfully revenging Evil; his Repentance and Devotion animated with the most cordial Invitations, and Acceptableness to God, in the Joy and Communion of the Holy Ghost, to the greatest cheering of the Heart, and to the best Settlement of the Peace of Conscience; and the Obedience of his Actions guided by Laws and Helps purposely ordain'd for the improving his Nature here in Holiness, that it may be perfected in Happiness hereafter.

As the Foundation of that Faith in the Mediator is laid in the reveal'd Union of the Divine and Human Nature, Son of God, and Son of Man, personally dying for the Sins of the World, rising from the dead, and interceding in Heaven for us. The Reasons of his *Death*, and the saving Efficacy of his *Blood shedding*, are express'd by *his dying for us, bearing our Sins*, or the Punishment of them*. By being an *Offering, Propitiation, Sacrifice*, for our Sins, and we receiving the Atonement†. His Blood shed for putting away, taking away, cleansing, washing, purifying, purging, remitting of Sins‡. And with respect to the Value of his precious Blood, and our Captivity under Sin and Satan, by purchasing, ransoming, and redeeming us||. And the happy Effects,

* Heb. ii. 9. 1 John iii. 16. Rom. iv. 25. 1 Cor. xv. 3. *Isaiah* iii. 4, 5, 6. Heb. ix. 29. 1 Pet. ii. 24.
† Rom. iii. 25. v. 11. 1 John ii. 2. iv. 10. Rom. viii. 13. Heb. ix. 26. Eph. v. 2.
‡ Heb. ix. 26. 1 John iii. 5. i. 17. Rev. i. 5. Tit. ii. 14. Heb. i. 3. Mat. xxvi. 28.
|| Acts xx. 28. 1 Tim. ii. 6. Mat. xx. 28. 1 Cor. vi. 20. 1 Pet. v. 9. Rev. v. 9.

CHAP. upon the easy Conditions of Faith, Repentance, and Amendment, are represented by being *pardoned, reconciled, having our Peace made with God, justified, sanctified, and receiving the Promise of eternal Inheritance*, by the Redemption of the Body, as well as the Soul*.

THIS seems to be the true Key of *Ch. vi.* of *St. John*, concerning eating his Flesh and drinking his Blood, or *digesting* and *imbibing* his Heavenly Doctrines. For, as all his particular Doctrines as Mediator may be summ'd up in, and receive their Force from his Offering his *Body* and *Blood* unto Death upon the Cross, to digest and imbibe that, by a continual Remembrance of what gave Life to the World, by eating and drinking the commemorative Bread and Wine, is the same thing as to digest and imbibe *all* his other Doctrines to the Health and Nutriment of the Soul. That way of eating and drinking Wisdom, *Eclus. xxiv. 21.* is truly and indeed to the Soul, eating and drinking *that Wisdom from above*, which actually descended from Heaven.

IT was necessary to take Human Nature upon Him, that he might *taste Death* for every Man *in the same Nature that sinned*. Such a Body was therefore prepared for him, that *he who sanctifieth and they who are sanctified may be one* in Nature; and as the Children were Partakers of Flesh and Blood, so was He; that he might destroy him who had the Power of Death, *i. e.* the

* *Eph. i. 7. iv. 32. Rom. v. 2. Col. i. 20, 21. 2 Cor. v. 18. 1 Pet. iii. 18. Acts xiii. 39. Rom. iii. 14. v. 9. 1 Cor. vi. 11. 2 Cor. v. 21. Heb. x. 10. 2 Thes. ii. 13. 1 Pet. i. 2. 1 Cor. i. 30. Heb. ix. 15. Rom. viii. 23.*

Devil:

Devil: And so vanquishing him in the same Nature that he had before vanquish'd, might regain the Life of the Body and Soul to eternal Life.

THE Devil was a Murderer from the Beginning, and the Captain of that Sin that brought Death into the World. For reducing of him, and all his Host of Devices, and to make an Antidote of that Death which the other design'd for eternal Poison, our *Jesus* became Captain of Life and Salvation, and beat and confounded him at his own Play. He thought, by introducing Death, he had sweetly glutted his own Malice in the irreparable Destruction of the Human Race; but by the very Means of Death our Mediator destroyed his Design; and raised Life, Life eternal, of greater Advantage and higher Degree, out of it, for the Good of Man, and the Glory of God's Mercy, Righteousness, and Wisdom. For it was the Glory of God to conquer the Devil, as well as Man, in every Step of that Dispensation, by Wisdom and Righteousness, more than with Power, which nothing can resist. He led Captivity captive, by triumphing over Death, and conquer'd the chief Leader of all Pride, by the Humiliation of himself to Man: Whilst the Goodness and Mercy of God to Man, in leading Him to Repentance by that Method, was all the Conquest he aim'd at over Man, for relinquishing the usurp'd Dominion of Sin and the Devil*.

* *Si enim Homo non vicisset inimicum Hominis; non juste victus esset inimicus. Rursus autem nisi Deus donasset salutem, non firmiter haberemus eam, & nisi Homo conjunctus fuisset Deo nostro, non potuisset particeps fieri incorruptibilitas, Iren. Lib. III. cap. 20.*

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IT was not *possible*, nor fit, *i. e.* morally possible in the Nature of Things, that the Blood of Bulls or of Goats, nor yet of Angels, (had they any) should take away the Sins of *Man*; because neither of them had a Nature conscious of his Sin, nor capable of being guilty of it, and therefore incapable of suffering the Pains of Death for it, or of vindicating the Justice of God in inflicting that Punishment upon the transgressing Nature of *Man*; or of being an Example and Warning to him against the Presumption of breaking the Divine Laws. Was God an arbitrary Being, it was very possible for the Blood of Bulls, &c. to take away Sins; but as he conducts himself by the true Constitution and Reason of Things it was impossible it should. Nor could any other Nature furnish the High Priest of our Profession with the proper *feeling* of our Infirmitics, and intended Sympathy with our Sufferings, to enable Him to become a *compassionate* High Priest for us.

NOR was it necessary for him to be undefiled, harmless, separate from Sinners, in order to die as a *Martyr*; for what Martyr was ever free from the Guilt of some personal Sins? But to die as a *Mediator*, or suffer as a Substitute in the Sinner's stead, he must of Necessity have no Sins of his own to atone for, because that would effectually bar the Sufficiency of his Atonement for the Sins of others, at the same time. And because perfectly innocent and free from all Sin of his own; no Power, no, not of his Father, could with any Justice take away his Life.

BUT

BUT having a previous inherent Right and Power over his own Life, to lay it down, and take it again; He voluntarily made a free Will Offering of it; at the same time God the Father was at liberty to accept, or refuse the Oblation, however generous it was. The vindictive Justice of the Law insisted upon the Punishment of the Sinner in *propria Persona*. But then as the End of his Law and Government was the Obedience of his Subjects, and the Probation-end of Punishment was the securing that Obedience, and the securing that was the establishing the Law and Government in its full Strength, and asserting the Honour and Dignity of the Legislator to the highest regard of Submission; if the Punishment might be transferr'd upon one *willing* to undergo it, so as no Injustice be done to a third Person, in the Thoughts of Mercy to redeem the Sinner from Death; and if the Person so ready to sustain it, and stand between us and Destruction, is also of that super-eminent Dignity, as that *His* Suffering would prove an effectual Terror to all reasonable Men, against repeating their Transgressions any more, and so recovering their bounden Duty and Obedience to the Law; What should hinder God, who in the midst of Judgment thinketh upon Mercy, from accepting a Method of pardoning and saving Sinners, so glorious to his innate Mercy, and to his essential Love of the World? And as *He* was pleased to *accept* it, when he was in no respect of Law or Justice obliged to do so, that render'd his forgiving Sin, in that manner, an Act of *Mercy, Grace, free Grace, and rich*. And to that very *Grace of God* is the Permission and Acceptance of the Death of the Mediator

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imputed,

CHAP. XI. imputed, *Heb. xi. 9.* that He, by the Grace of God, might taste Death for every Man. So *John iii. 16.* I *John iv. 9.* For the original Promise in Paradise was of Grace, and therefore every thing that follow'd after in that whole Dispensation must be of Grace likewise, exclusive of Debt in the Sense of *Merit* on Man's Part, in every Article.

WHATEVER the Sacrifice is, how valuable or costly soever, still it is the *Acceptance* of God, the offended Party, that must admit of that Exchange, or allow it to be *vicarious*, or receive it in Exemption of, and in Propitiation for the guilty Sinner; that he may enjoy the saving Benefit and Efficacy thereof, by being personally releas'd from having his Trespases and its Wages imputed to him, or having his Sins and Iniquities remember'd any more. The Suffering of the innocent, though in the same Nature, can no otherwise become an Expiation for the Soul that sinneth; because the Suffering of another not being the Suffering of the Person that sinned; the Obligation of the Law, which exacts, and marks out the Punishment of the Sinner in Person, had been disregarded; unless the Legislator, who had the Power of dispensing with his own Laws, so as best to procure Obedience, and secure the Ends of their Institution, had been pleas'd to wave his own Right, and relax his own Law, and, by the interposal of his Grace and Mercy, admit the Suffering, and accept of the Punishment of one, in lieu of the other; of the more worthy, willing Mediator *Christ Jesus*, instead of criminal, guilty Man; the Just for the Unjust.

So that though the Pardon of Man's Sins is issued *through Christ*, and granted for the Sake, and Consideration of his Sufferings, it is nevertheless, with respect to Man, a free, gratuitous Pardon, and a special, undeserved, unobligated Act of Grace; and the Sinner is as much obliged to Mercy, as if there was no Christ: but by taking that Method, and sending his Son, his Love and his Mercy are so much the more enhanc'd to Man. It appears by right Reason in the Book of *Job*, who was a *Deist*; that though God is in himself of a placable and propitious Disposition, yet, when he is displeas'd, He insists upon one to intervene between himself and the Offender, *with Sacrifice*, whom He thinks proper to accept, before He will become *actually* reconciled with the Offender. *My Anger* (said he to *Eliphaz*) *is kindled against thee, and thy two Friends; because ye have not spoken of me the Things that are right, as my Servant Job, Therefore take unto you now seven Bullocks, and seven Rams, and go to my Servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a Burnt-Offering, and my Servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept, his Face or Person, as in the Margin; lest I deal with you after your Folly*, ch. xlii. 7, 8. He was so appeasable and good as to appoint the Means to his Favour, but would not however be *actually* appeas'd, till the Sacrifice was first offer'd by Him, whom He appointed; and because appointed, therefore only to be accepted. They might have thought from the Apprehensions they had of his natural Goodness, that Repentance had been sufficient to pacify Him. But we see how vain are such Thoughts, and how contrary to God's Thoughts.

If the Mediator is consider'd as the *Surety* of the Covenant, as He is stiled, and God the Father as a *Legislator*, all Difficulties vanish. Suppose at the Creation of our World, He, who is called *the Lamb slain from the Foundation of it*, in giving such a Talent to the new Creature Man, as Liberty and Freedom of Will, by the abusing of which in breaking the Law, God might be dishonoured, (as He had been before by the fallen Angels) should engage with God, as our *Surety*: "That all we his Creatures should not apostatize from his Government;" He that made them under God, and endow'd them with that religious Faculty would undertake for that.

Now in Virtue of that *Promise* and *Undertaking* as our *Surety*, (which either then commenc'd, or we know not when it did) it was right and dutiful in the Mediator to fulfil his Engagement; and, well knowing the Punishment of the Law to Disobedience, having freely bound himself as our *Surety*, it was a just Debt of Obedience in Him to his Father to come into the World, at the properest Time, to perform his Engagement, and perform it as cheerfully as he undertook it, without any Reluctance but what is natural and becoming Flesh and Blood at the Prospect of Death. And that Obedience unto Death being due to the Father in Justice of his Son's *Engagement*, and in Consideration of his *Undertaking* as our *Sponsor* or *Surety*, it was right in the Father, and, as this Son was innocent, He could have no other Right to oblige him, to appoint that it should be so, and ordain it as his *Will* to be obey'd by Him, in dispensing his Love and Salvation to the World. It was just in God

God the Father *after* that, but not before that, to require so much of the Mediator, and *strictly exact* and demand, as he did, the Performance from Him.

AND thus the requiring Will of the Father insisting upon so much to be done, and our Lord's ready Compliance therewith, (as it is every where represented in the Scripture) being the *Consequence*, not the Cause of the *Willingness* and heroick Goodness of his Son, our Saviour in his *ante-mundane* State first engaging, and after undergoing so bitter and shameful a Death for us; and this being made an Act of Counsel, it may very well be said, he was deliver'd by the determin'd Counsel of God; all the little Objections of God's glutting his *Revenge*, *Cruelty*, &c. upon his innocent Son, so often and so falsely imputed by our Author, and others of his way of thinking, to this Dispensation of God in Christ reconciling the World to himself, entirely vanish, and disappear,

FOR the Law knows neither Cruelty nor Revenge. If the Punishment of Sin is Death, and so justly due to it as to be called its *Wages*, had we suffer'd the Punishment in Person, it had neither been Cruelty nor Revenge in God; how then should it take that Denomination, when translated upon another, with his own Consent, and in Favour to Him relax'd to a less Degree, and for a shorter time? That Punishment may be translated by a human Legislator from a guilty Person to an *innocent*, where the guilty Person is belov'd by the innocent, is clear from the applauded Instance of *Zaleucus* King of the *Locri*, who, when he had made a Law that both the

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Eyes of an Adulterer should be put out, and his *Son* being catch'd in Adultery, rather than the Law should be wholly broken, commanded one Eye of his Son, and another of his own, to be put out. And for that Fact *Val. Maximus* commends him both as a just Judge, and a merciful Father.

If any Injustice this way, upon our Saviour, in requiring his Life as a Ransom and Sacrifice for us; it would be the same Injustice in God to send him into the World to lay down his Life as a *Testimony* to the Truth of that Doctrine, that God is reconcilable to Sinners; since He knew taking away his Life would be the Consequence of publishing that Truth, or of shewing himself so unlike the rest of the World, as to be *perfectly righteous*. *Plato* himself acknowledges the Corruption of the World to be so prodigious, "that if a Man *perfectly righteous* should come upon Earth, he would find so much Opposition, that we would be imprison'd, reviled, scourged, and in fine, crucified by such, who, tho' they were extremely wicked, would yet pass for righteous Men."

WILLINGNESS and Consent to foreseen Sufferings take off all Imputation of Injury or Hardship towards the vicarious Sufferer. In inferior Judicatures, it is true, if an innocent Person should offer himself to Death, before a Judge of the Law, in room of one guilty and deserving of it, and had received Sentence accordingly, he could not be accepted for two Reasons, 1. Because the Person offering had no Property in his own Life, and therefore guilty of tendering what was not his own. 2. Because the Judge has

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has no Power over an innocent Person's Life to take it away, in any respect, unless he had forfeited it to the Law by his Guilt. Was the Judge to admit of the Exchange, he himself would become a Criminal, in condemning the innocent and acquitting the guilty; in such a *subordinate* Judge it would be no less than misplacing Punishment, and perverting the due Course of Justice, contrary to his Trust, and the Rule of the Law, which was to guide his Proceeding; neither has he it in his Power ever after to make a personal Amends to the Sufferer for accepting his Offer.

BUT now, if we reflect upon God as a *Legislator*, and the Mediator between Him and Man, as *having Life in himself*, a Power to lay it down, and take it up at his Liberty, no Imagination of Injustice can be ascribed to God, nor ill Usage to the Mediator as proceeding from Him. So far from that, that the *Willingness* of the Son to lay down his Life, and take it again in the Cause of Man's Salvation, was one of the particular Grounds and Reasons of the *Father's* loving him, *John* x. 17, 18. The Legislator in that Case can't be injur'd, nor yet despised in his Mercy of accepting the Exchange; because in lieu of the Life of the Offender, which he gives, he receives that of the *Offerer*, and that must be an Equivalent to the Justice of his Law requiring Death, and equally answers the Ends of Government, the Support of his Authority. And the *Offerer*, who can soon take up the Life he laid down, can't be injured, because for the Life which he lays down, he receives from the Legislator the Life of the Offender, which is dearer to him. But if inflicted Punishment in the Death of the Mediator had not taken place, the Law threatening

ning Death to the Sinner, and the Relation between Governor and Governed must both have been so far injured, as to die, and be dissolv'd.

WHEN such a one therefore presents himself, who has a real Property in his own Life, and whose Offer is so valuable before Him, who is supreme over the Law; it is as much his Right to relax and dispense with his own Laws, as it was at first to make them; He is accountable to none: Nor has He any Rule to go by in guiding his Proceedings with Men, but what shall most engage their Love and Esteem, their Fear and Awe of his Authority over them; and best promote their real Good and Happiness, which is his own Glory. If any Expedient therefore offers from a *third* Person that effectually answers these Ends, his Mercy and Goodness would never hesitate to close with it, as the best Course that could be taken with frail, peccant Man, for the better Observance of his Laws for the future.

THAT Passage therefore in the *Characteristicks**, quite mistakes the Character wherein God judges and determines: "Whoever thinks there is a God, and pretends formally to believe that he is *just* and *good*, must suppose that there is independantly such a thing as *Justice* and *Injustice*, *Truth* and *Falshood*, *Right* and *Wrong*; according to which he pronounces God is *just*, *righteous*, and *true*. If the mere Will, Decree or Law of God, is said absolutely to constitute Right and Wrong, then are these latter Words of no Signification at all. For thus if each Part of a Contradiction

* *Characteristicks*, Vol. II. page 50.

" was

" was affirmed for Truth by the Supreme Power, CHAP.
" that would consequently become *true*. Thus XI.
" if one Person was decreed to suffer for another's Fault, the Sentence would be *just* and
" *equitable*.

IN answer to this Reflection upon Christianity. We are not to estimate the Goodness or Justice of God by the Measures of the Goodness and Justice of a *subordinate* Judge in his Proceedings. For then neither Christ could have suffered though he had offered himself, nor could the Offender any way escape the Punishment of the Law. But He is to be consider'd as a *Legislator*, who does not vary, but is still constant and true to the Design of Punishment, and the End of his Law, which is to have it observed. If it can be done one way, and not another, upon a Change of Circumstances, and a Person offers himself freely to Punishment whose Suffering answers the Design of Punishment; in that Case, the Sentence will be both *righteous* and *true*, because true to the righteous Intention of the Law; though it is not properly a *Sentence* on the Part of God, but a Permission in Him, that the third Person should suffer according to his own Offer. And if the Intention of Punishment, and of the Law, can be better observ'd and fulfilled one way than another, then the Sentence is not only righteous and true, but *wise* and *merciful* moreover. So that there is no Notion of *Right* or *Wrong* inverted, as if an inferior Judge had acted. And God himself estimates, and measures out to us his own Justice, by this Dispensation: *That he might be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus**, and in many Places calls this Method

* *Rom. iii. 26.*

by

CHAP. XI. by the Name of *his own Righteousness*, as if he gloried in accepting defective Righteousness upon Earth, in that manner, and that manner *only*.

IF the transferring of Punishment from the guilty Principal, to the innocent Substitute, might prove the Reformation of the guilty, and the preserving the Principal alive (to whom the personal Execution of the Punishment must be utter Ruination) the Substitute at the same time suffering no Injury, it would be so far from *misplacing* of Punishment, or *perverting* the due Course of Justice, that it would be the greatest Improvement to both of them, that either of them could possibly receive. An Improvement that God could have added to neither of them, before Man had sinned, or before the Mediator had offered his Service in behalf of Man.

AND, if *admitting* Him voluntarily offering Himself to Death for redeeming Man from the Curse of the Law, the Sentence of it, would ingratiate and engraft into Man the Love of God's Name, with Resolutions of obeying him better, and enhance the Fear of offending any more; Man would be the Gainer, and God would be rejoiced at it, and the Mediator would be no Loser: And so the Divine Government, which had been disorder'd by the Perverseness of Man, would go on in its due Course.

THE Mediator was so far from being a Loser by what he so lovingly suffer'd for us Men, that God was as willing as he was able, to let him find that very human Nature of his, wherein he did such shameful bitter Penance for the Sins of Men, (which should vacate and set aside *other* Penances,

Penances, Satisfactions, Masses, and Merits for CHAP. XI. Sin) recompenced and exalted to his own Right Hand; and made *Lord and King*, not only over all the Worlds of *Angels, Principalities, Powers*; and over *Death*, the last Enemy that shall be subdued: And the Homage of all these is due unto Him, as a Reward of his unparalleled Humiliation to the Death of the Cross. And considering who he was in our Nature, it must be confess'd his Humanity earnt it all, by what he suffer'd.

THE DIGNITY of the Person suffering such Things for us, is a very awful, and affecting Consideration, and concerns us to improve in it, as a prime Fundamental of our Holy Religion. Thus the Scriptures would raise and exalt our religious Contemplations of his Sufferings, by the sublime Value of the Divine Nature personally united to the Human. *The Lord of Glory is said to be crucified* *; and *He who was in the Form of God, humbled himself and became obedient unto the Death of the Cross* †, and *the Church to be purchased with the Blood of God* ‡. Though he suffer'd what he did in his Human Nature, yet that being personally united to the Divine, and He being *God* as well as Man, the Value is rated, and the Denomination taken from the *principal* Nature in the Union.

THUS of the two different Natures, Soul and Body of Man, what is properly done by one, is familiarly ascribed to the other, as *touching, eating* ||, &c. to the *Soul*, so *vice versa*. O

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CHAP. XI. thou that hearest Prayer, unto thee shall all *Fleſh* come*, &c. Or if a Plebeian is adopted to be an Emperor, any Suffering or Indignity done to him afterwards, is enhanced from his imperial Elevation. The People estimated the Life of *David* worth more than ten Thousand of themselves †. Thus “ the Civil Law determines that a Tree “ transplanted from one Soil to another, and “ taking Root there, belongs to the Owner of “ that Ground; in regard that receiving Nourish- “ ment from a new Earth, it becomes as it were “ another Tree, though there be the same in- “ dividual Root, the same Body, and the same “ Soul of Vegetation as before. *Plantata & “ constita ut solo cedant est juris constituti, cujus ratio “ est quod ista solo alantur.* Grot. de Jur. Bel. & Pacis, Lib. II. cap. 8. Thus the Human “ Nature, taken from the common Mass of “ Mankind, and transplanted by personal Uni- “ on into the Divine, is to be reckon’d as en- “ tirely belonging to the Divine, and the Actions “ proceeding from it are not merely Human, “ but are raised above their natural Worth, and “ become meritorious.”

It is very unsafe and unbecoming the Obligations of Christians to depress the Dignity of the Mediator, or subtract from his Divine Nature, as Son of God, the next Person to the Father. Because the depressing of that, depresses 1. The Perfection of the Mediator, which was shewn before to consist in the personal Union of the Divine and Human Nature. 2. The Certainty of our Reconciliation. 3. The Wisdom of God in accepting such a Person to suffering,

* Psalm lxxv. 2.

† 2 Sam. xviii. 3.

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if a less would have suffic’d. 4. The Love of God and Christ towards us, and our reciprocal bounden Love towards them. 5. The Humility of our Lord in his Condescension. 6. The Heinousness and Demerit of Sin. 7. God’s hatred against it. 8. Our Fear of his Displeasure in committing it. 6. The Vindication of his Authority, Honour, and Dignity, and the firmer Establishment of the Divine Law and Government. 10. The Mediator’s Intercession for us 11. His Capacity of being *King, Lord, Judge* over us. 12. Our Honour and Worship of Him. This Persuasion gives a Confidence more than Human to our Faith, and a *παρρησία* steadfast and immoveable to the Reason of the Hope that is in us, when interrogated for an Answer concerning it: And that well becoming Assurance may be added which the Apostle uses in the Hope of future Glory *παρρησιᾶς οὖν παρροῦμεν δὲ*, 2 Cor. v. 6, 8. that *this great Truth* of this great Means must needs be effectual with our own confiding Endeavours to make us *free* from the Guilt, and from the Dominion of Sin. All these practical Points are interested in this Persuasion; and operate upon Christians more, or less, in working out their Salvation, as they come up to, or recede from the Belief of his Divine Nature, as well as his Human; *Son of God*, as well as *Son of Man*.

As it was the *Will* and *Pleasure* of God the Father to redeem us by that Method of sending his only begotten Son into the World, that whoever believeth in him might have everlasting Life: So from that very Consideration and Confession of his Son’s stupendous Condescension *from the Form of God*, to a Form and Fashion of a Man, a Servant of no Reputation, dying upon the Cross

CHAP. XI. Crofs for our Redemption, and thereupon exalted to be *Lord over all, to the Glory of God the Father*, is our Obligation inferr'd * of *working out our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling*; upon this exciting Ground and Motive, *because it is God who works in us*, co-operates in that Work of our Salvation by Means of the *aforsaid Faith* in us, and by the Aids of his Spirit, without whom none can say that *Jesus is the Lord* †.

THIS profound Wisdom of God in thus dispensing Salvation to the World through the Death of his Son, so much superior to, and unscrutable by the Wisdom of Man before it was revealed, is most illustrious, adorable, and convincing to his Reason, now it is revealed to his Benefit. The Treasures of this Wisdom were unsearchable to the *Angels*, who, since its Revelation to the Churches, go to School upon Earth, to look into and adore: And what they can't learn there, they, though not directly interested in it, make up in Heaven, in Songs and Hallelujahs, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive Blessings, Honour, &c.* Man is not only saved by it, but all Points of the Divine Honour, and Justice, Law and Government are saved by it too; and not only saved, but advanced and ingratiated into all the Powers and Obligations of Man's Obedience, much deeper and surer than if God had, or would pardon all Sin without the Consideration of the Mediator's suffering the Punishment, in Expiation for the Sinner.

THE following are therefore base Reflections, and perverse Misrepresentations of the Author of

* *Phil. ii. 6, to the 14th.*

† *1 Cor. xii. 3.*

CHAP. XI. *Christ. as old, &c.* as "of a King, who, though he freely pardon'd his repenting Rebels, yet should *cause* his most loyal, and only Son to be put to Death to shew his Hatred to Rebellion, to vindicate the Honour of those Laws, which forbid putting an innocent Person to Death." The Death of the Son was not after he *had* pardon'd the Rebels, but an awful Inducement to the Pardon; nor did he *cause* his Death, but permitted it. Nor was it any Injury to him freely offering himself to Death, having Power over his own Life. "That Sins freely pardon'd wanted an Expiation; that all was mere Mercy and pure Forgiveness after a full Equivalent paid," have been fully answered before without any Mention of *Equivalent*. What follows is so gross a Misrepresentation, I forbear to repeat it.

FOR if the Intention of the Divine Law is the Spirit and Reason of the Law, as it is of all Law; God consulting that Intention in this Method carry'd it on with wonderful Glory, Sagacity, and Rectitude, by this Method. The Intention both of the Law, and of Punishment being to procure Obedience, such as we are capable of in our degenerate Condition, God in the first Proposal of forgiving past Sins in the Mediator, and accepting him as a Substitute, suffering the Punishment due to the Sinner; as Master of his own Favours, took Care to *accept* it under proper *Restrictions*, and the well known *Limitations* of *Faith*, *Repentance*, and *Amendment*: The first has Respect to the *Mediator*; the other two to the Laws of God, and our Ability of obeying.

DEISM DELINEATED.

So that Faith without Repentance and Amendment ensuing, is of no Signification to the Pardon of Sins past, because Christian Faith always means *Fidelity* to Christian Works, though it is the Grace of the new Covenant or Gospel to admit Repentance and sincere Obedience, which are in every Man's Power, instead of Innocence and unfinning Obedience; yet the Foundation of that Covenant standeth sure, he that nameth the Name of Christ, let him depart from all Iniquity, by *Repentance* and *sincere Obedience*. Nor are Repentance and Amendment *without* Faith, (where the Gospel is preach'd) that Righteousness which will justify in the Sight of God, or entitle those, who resolutely depend thereon, to any Pardon of their Sins, in Derision of that Wisdom, and Disdain of that Belief whereon Pardon and eternal Life are proclaim'd and promis'd. Neither of them without the other is available to Salvation: And where all *three* do not go together in a Christian State, they are all as good as absent. Thus the primary Intention of our Redemption is our Reformation, to redeem us from all Iniquity, and to save us from our Sins, not in our Sins. Had the forgiving Mercy of God in Christ descended to lower Conditions than Repentance and future Obedience, the most obstinate in Rebellion had been upon an equal Foot of Favour with those that submit to his Laws, which would put an End to the Divine Government, and reverse the very Design of creating and redeeming Man. He therefore delivers none from the Guilt and Punishment of Sin, but those who accept to be deliver'd, and concur in their Endeavours to free themselves from the Dominion of it.

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DEISM DELINEATED.

THERE cannot possibly be a greater Demonstration given to the World of God's Hatred and Indignation against Sin, or of the Greatness of its Guilt; since it is as legible in the Punishment of his Son, or rather more so than if the Offender himself had suffer'd. That, rather than Presumptuous Iniquity should go unpunish'd, he hated it more than he loved the only begotten Son of his own Bosom. Nay, not only suffer'd him to be exposed to the Pains, and Ignominy of a temporal Death, but, what seems more dreadful, and less supportable, to taste, for a short Time, some of the Horrors and Vengeance of eternal Death due unto Sinners; in the *Dereliction* of him in his Agony in the Garden, when all the infernal Powers of Darkness seem to be let loose upon his righteous Spirit, and he left to bear the whole Weight of God's Displeasure; the feeling of which, besides Tears and strong Cries, produced a preternatural Sweat of great Drops of Blood. That and that only seems to be the *Hour* he *pray'd* the Father to save him from, not the Hour of Death, for he was fortify'd and prepar'd for that.

If therefore the Vengeance of one *Hour* of the Powers of Darkness was so insupportable to him, as to require an Angel from Heaven to comfort him; how can the Sinner think of being able to bear to all *Eternity* the inexpressible Horrors and Torments of the Damn'd? Or, thinking thereon, forbear to fear and tremble into an immediate Repentance? It must be the greatest Madness and Loss of Reason to imagine, that God will ever spare him in his avow'd Enmity, when he spared not his own Son, who had never offended against him.

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HENCE appears the Weakness and Impertinence of that Opinion, that *one Drop* of our Saviour's Blood was of Value sufficient to save the whole World. If one Drop would have sufficed, what Occasion for the Effusion of the rest? But here lies the Mistake; the Redemption depended not upon some Sufferings, or the injurious Loss of some Blood, but upon the *Death* of the Mediator, and the Blood of the new Covenant is an equivalent Expression to that. It being consonant to Reason that the Expiation of Punishment should be *agreeable* to the Punishment, if the Wages of Sin is Death, *i. e.* Separation of Soul and Body, no less can suffice in the *Mediator* in order to a proper, full Expiation for the guilty Sinner.

BUT now, if God passing by this wise Method of saving Sinners had executed the Punishment upon Offenders in their utter Destruction, how could he have display'd before Men, the Aversion of his Holiness, and the perfect Abhorrence he bears to Sin? It could not have appear'd to Men to do them any Good, for that was too late; it might have appear'd to Angels, but that was to no Purpose, it could be no Example to them: They side so much already with God in the Hatred of Sin, and its ruinous Consequences, that the Conversion of a Sinner is a Festival to them.

IF then the Execution of Personal Punishment must have been the Destruction of the human Race; and if a Pardon proclaimed from the natural Goodness of God without any Vindication on his Part, would amount to an Act of Indemnity, or general Indulgence, for breaking his Laws,

Laws, or an universal Jubilee for Joy, that Men might do so; there is no Medium, but in a *Mediator*. And that makes all Things meet: It makes Peace in Heaven by reconciling all the Divine Attributes; brings Peace to the Conscience on Earth, by making Peace between Heaven and Earth. It gives God an honourable Opportunity of displaying his Mercy and Goodness unto Men; well becoming himself, and consistent with what he is, a *Governor* over us; more this Way than could be done any other Way: any other Way, we must either cease to be, or he must cease to be our Governor, as he is; Because the Safety of his Honour was to be consulted, as well as the Safety and Salvation of Men. Repentance and Amendment is all that is in Man's Power; but that is no Vindication of the Honour of the Justice that requir'd Punishment, nor of the Honour of the Wisdom and Mercy that spar'd us. Therefore the *Mediator* consulted those Honours in the first Place; by doing what he did, he supply'd what we could not do; that he might the more oblige us to do what we can. It is not what a private Person may do in pardoning an Offender against himself; but what becomes a *Governor* to do, with respect to his Subjects.

STILL it may be thought, if God had publish'd a general Amnesty in Compassion to the Sins of Men without any Regard to a Mediator, or his atoning Sacrifice for Sin; such a Revelation as this, the *Deists* would receive with all their Hearts; there would be no 30,000 various Readings in it*, though they know in their

* Page 260, 294.

CHAP. own Consciences that no Writing of the like Antiquity could escape with less, or less material ones.

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WHAT have these Authors to do with various Readings? Unless it is merely to help them to a Cavil. They profess nothing worth reading but the *moral Part*; with respect to which, their old Friend *Spinoza* himself acquits the Bible from any literal Deficiency in the least. *Hæc certa affirmare possum, me nullam animadvertisse mendam, nec Lectionum varietatem circa moralia documenta, quæ obscura aut dubia reddere potest.* Tract. Theol. Polit. cap. 9. Nor should we hear any thing of their other affected Objections. They would have written in Defence of it, in full Persuasion that it became the Goodness of God to make *such* a Revelation to the World. But then they should have taken Care to have answer'd a few Objections which arise upon that Supposition.

1. How would they by this Method be able to shew or ascertain God's Hatred of Sin, in the Behaviour of Man; of that Sin which is a Transgression of their beloved Gospel the Law of Nature? A Kind of Hatred, perhaps, they don't much care to hear of, though it is as demonstrable by the Light of Reason as that Light is contrary to Darknesh, and Sweet to Bitter; as necessary to be believed by all those who would pay an unfeign'd Respect and Obedience to that Law; and as just and indispensable in God's *Inspection* over Mens Actions, as it is to regard himself, to be what he is, pure, and holy; and their iniquitous Proceedings, as what they really are: not all alike odious in Degree, but as they differ, and exceed in Circumstances of Affront to God, Harm to Society, and Dishonour to Human Nature.

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THIS Hatred (not unexpiable) of Sin is as consistent with his Love of the Sinner, as in a Parent is blended the sure Love of his Child with the perfect Hatred of his ruinous Courses. And every wilful Sinner, before he is harden'd, has this Testimony within himself of the Divine Dislike of his Ways, because they are against the Approbation of his own Mind, much more against God's; the Frame and Design of his own Nature remonstrate against them, much more the Author and Father of his Nature.

THE Turpitude is great enough without any Occasion for the quarrelsome Doctrine of the *Infinity* of Sin. In a philosophical Sense, there is certainly great Impropriety in such an Idea: For then all Sins would be equal. And if every Sin is therefore infinite because it is a Transgression of a Law of God who is infinite, then every Virtue in Obedience to his Laws would be infinite likewise. But as we read of the *great* and *least* Commandments, (which supposes others of a middle Nature) we may be sure there are Degrees and Inequalities in Virtue, and consequently by the Rule of Contraries, in Sin, and therefore not infinite. If it is meant in a *rhetorical* or *aggregate* Sense, that the wilful Sins of particular Persons, or the Sins of the whole World, are so enormously odious to, and devious from the original Pattern, the *Holiness* of God, as nothing less could suffice, in Wisdom, to expiate their Guilt; or repair the violated Honour; the Sin of Man being a Breach of the Relation we stand in to the Attribute of *Holiness*, of the Divine Legislator; or nothing less vindicate the Authority of his Laws, and the justice of his Punishments, than the Death of his

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CHAP. Son; it is a very true Sense, and therefore very religious. So that it is the Justice of God's Punishment in making *the Wages of Sin to be Death*, that thereby receives Propitiation, Atonement, expiatory Sacrifice, Ransom, or, as it is commonly called, Satisfaction for the Punishment remitted to believing penitent Sinners. Though it was the same Thing to the Care and Wisdom of the Legislator, whether that *penal* Debt was paid by the Debtor, or by his Surety, provided the End and Design of his Laws was answer'd; yet it not being the same Thing to us; but as different as Salvation is to Destruction, it was an Act of *Mercy* to us to accept of the Surety, in Lieu of the Debtor; at the same Time the Demands of Justice, which might have objected to that Method, were conditionally cancelled against us by the Surety. It is a very improper Expression to talk (as some do) of our Saviour's *accepting* the Office of being Mediator; because it is the Creditor who *accepts* of the Surety; and he, to whom the Sacrifice is offer'd, not the Offerer, who *accepts* it.

THE less Displeasure Men apprehend in God against their Deviations from his Laws, the more their corrupt Inclination unavoidably increases to the Repetition of them; and the easier and cheaper the Terms whereon they fancy he will be reconciled, the less Necessity is there for parting with their darling Irregularities; the more Encouragement they will certainly take to continue in them, with Greediness, and without any disquieting Concern about the Displeasure of so good natur'd a Being. This is a polite genteel Sort of Religion after their own Heart, offering little Interruption to Vice, or Disturbance to Lusts, which they persuade themselves not to be displeasing

pleasing to God for that Reason, because *he* receives no Injury from them; such a Scheme they think worthy to come from him; and in a wrong Meaning, can, with our Author*, quote *Job* and *Esdras*; for that, *If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him? Or if thy Transgressions are multiply'd, what dost thou unto him? What is Man that thou shouldest take Displeasure at him? Or what is a corruptible Generation, that thou shouldest be so bitter towards it?*

BUT their Brother Deists, the ancient and modern *Heathens*, from the Light of Nature, had quite different Notions of the Deity; being in their religious Applications universally impress'd with a Sense of his *Displeasure* against Sin, and a Fear of his Justice in punishing for it, though it wrought no Repentance; and of their own Unworthiness to approach, and Incapacity to atone him without Sacrifices, and Mediators many. They wander'd accordingly with great Anxiety of Mind in Shadows and Darknes, wishing for Instruction and Revelation from Heaven. Whilst the Christian Deists (if I may call them so who live in a Christian Country) enjoy the Light and the Substance of the one true Mediator, and his only Sacrifice for Sin; but come not to the Light, because their Deeds are Evil; they love those Deeds, and therefore they hate a Religion which gives such evident Marks and Demonstrations of God's Hatred of Sin.

2. How does any *positive* Punishment of Sin appear in their Scheme? Where there is no Punishment annex'd, the Law of Virtue and good

* Page 34.

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Morals is no more than an Intreaty, and Letter of Request to the Subjects, (as was shewn before) and if it is not positively threaten'd to be inflicted, there appears no positive Concern in the Governor, whether his Laws are obey'd, or not. Punishment is the Language and Reason that authoritatively convinces those Passions of incogitent Sinners, which govern them more than their Understanding, and make them the Slaves they are to their Sins. And the Sufferance of eternal Vengeance is ordained as an effectual counterbalance to the Violence of their sensual Passions and Appetites, to arrest their wrong Choice, and set it to rights.

Whoever thinks at all, can never be always so stupid, as to chuse that dreadful Consequence every Time he chuses his Sin; and when he finds himself unable to separate that Consequence from his Sin, it will force him to the Thoughts of divorcing himself from it, and reforming his Life. But if there is no other Punishment, nor ill Consequences in a wicked Life, as the Deists give out, than the *natural* Punishment and Consequences attendant upon Sin; and they being known beforehand what they are, either in themselves, or others, they are ready to chuse *such* a tolerable future Evil for the Sake of present beloved Sins. And thus a Door is set open, as far as their pious Endeavours can contribute, to over-run the World with all Wickedness, and stock Hell with miserable Sinners past Redemption.

3. How does it appear from their Scheme, that God has any Regard to that which is to be taken Care of in the *first* Place, his own Authority over us as a Governor, and his Right to our Obedience;

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Obedience; or to the ascertaining his Subjects what his Laws are, which they are to observe? For if according to their Gospel of Nature, as they love to call it, God could freely and absolutely pardon all the Sins of the World, without any Respect to the Interposition of a Mediator, or any Propitiation, or Sacrifice, or condign Punishment, to make Satisfaction to the Justice and sacred Honour of the Divine Laws, or preserve, or recover Mens Reverence of the Authority of the heavenly Governor: Upon this Supposition, what awful Ideas have we left of the Divine Justice, Holiness, or Authority, to intimidate any one Offender, so much as for one Day, to abstain from any Iniquity he is inclined to, or forbear insulting his Maker daily to his Face? Seeing it is no Provocation to him, as is very plain, from his prostituting his Pardons at *that rate*.

If nothing had been done in Consideration of the Pardon of Sin, for deterring us from it, Sin would have been as nothing to us, the Pardon and the Pardoner equally despised. Whilst the Method he has taken to forgive, was taken in order to rouse up the Reason of the Sinner, though tied and bound with the Chain of his Sins, into an Admiration as well as Conviction of the Pitiableness of his great Mercy in readiness to release and loose him in that Way, if he will but consent to part with his Sins and his Chains. If he punishes for Sin, it is evident, it must be after this, from an arbitrary Will and Power, which these Gentlemen exclude out of their Notion of God; it can't be any more out of Principles of Justice, or Regard to his own Honour; for they are all forfeited in the Eyes of his Subjects, by the *Deistical*

CHAP. XI. *cal* Scheme. And thus God must tamely resign his Authority to his Creature Man, and leave him to be a Law to himself. So prophanely ridiculous are the Consequences flowing from their Principles.

AND as God is of little Use in their Scheme, their Law of Nature is equally insignificant: Being unwritten, unconnected, and uncollected in a full Body, with all its Particulars; scatter'd in the *Eticks*, or *Offices* of this Man, and in the Fragments of another, and incapable of being recommended by *competent* Authority by any one mere Man, as all Men are equal. It is like the Light within, in their own keeping, to be vary'd, dispens'd with, and interpreted to their own Occasions; arbitrary as they are in their own respective Determinations, and uncontrouled by any. And as they are Masters of themselves, accountable to none, who is Lord over them? It is a great Convenience to their free Way of thinking, and living, to have an inward Religion, which they can so easily accommodate to it. And this, perhaps, is a secret Reason of no small Influence, why they are so very much against reveal'd Religion; because that is *written*, and particularly *explicit* in the Particulars of Morality and Obedience, and therefore not so complaisant and tractable to their Purpose.

NOW, if the Gospel of Christ exhibits the Law of Nature in its full Extent, and in the truest Perfection of its Meaning and Obligation, and enforces it by the same Divine Authority that made it; as the End and Scope it has to fulfil, by the Assistance of Divine Means, Motives, Aids, Helps Instruments that were wanting, and pur-

posely

CHAP. XI. posely reveal'd to compleat the Observance of it in all our Behaviour; and if it sets forth the Justice, the Honour, and the Authority of God in all becoming Influences, as they are related to our Thoughts, Words, and Actions; if it assures us of the certain tremendous Punishment of unrepented Sin; and demonstrates the Divine Hatred of it in the highest Degree imaginable; and all in the Example of Christ suffering in our Stead; and if the Purpose of Punishment, and all the Ends of the Divine Law are better obtained, than if we had suffer'd ourselves, or been absolved from our Sins without his doing any thing for us: Then, there appearing so many surprizing Demonstrations of the Divine Wisdom and Counsel in this Abyss of it; it must be own'd a Religion worthy to proceed from God, and perfectly becoming him to establish in the World. And consequently that the Reverse of this, the Religion of the *Deists* amongst us, must be Weakness and Folly; a Contradiction to the Attributes and Perfections of the Divine Nature; an unreasonable Endeavour to subvert the Measures of the Divine Œconomy, that are so full of the best Reasons and Perfections of the best Government; as well as of the highest Comfort and Consolation unto Man. And, perhaps, in the Opinion and Use of most of them, their pretended Religion, in serious Earnest, is no other than an hypocritical Skreen for a resolv'd Attachment to the World, and their own Lusts.

BUT more especially, if the Love, Mercy, and Goodness of God appear likewise with more Lustre, and to more worthy Effects in this Dispensation of each of them, through the Death of the Mediator, than in *their* presumptuous, arbitrary

CHAP. XI. arbitrary Distributions of the same; then, the rational Beauty, Harmony, Fitness, and Sublimity of all that the Mediator did, or God required for the Redemption of Sinners, will shine with the most engaging Evidence, to the captivating the Will and Affections, and all the inward Powers of embracing so incomparable a Salvation; and to the kindling at the Altar of so much Love and Mercy conferr'd upon us, that religious Love of God and our Saviour in our Hearts and Souls, as shall effectually, and above all the other Principles of human Nature, constrain us to cleave stedfastly to their Service unto the End of our Lives.

By the Principles ingrafted in our Nature, as there is no Enforcement of Reason but by Reason, so nothing can induce rational Love but what is rationally amiable; more especially that worthy Goodness and Loving-Kindness which loves us most, and is most beneficent unto us: *Nec ratio sine bonitate ratio est, nec bonitas sine ratione bonitas*, says one of the Ancients; which is equivalent to, *the Ways of the Lord are Mercy and Truth; Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other*. God uses the same Method, but in a higher Degree, of reconciling us, at Enmity with himself, viz. by overcoming our Evil with his Good, as he would have us make use of towards our personal Enemies. Would we (as who would not?) rather be led than driven? What is it but the Goodness of God τὸ χρηστὸν Θεοῦ that leadeth us to Repentance. Power speaks Terror rather than Encouragement to the poor Sinner; mere Authority never gains the Heart. We may yield a forced Obedience, but never a willing nor a lasting one, till the Opinion of Goodness, and the

the Sense of superadded Kindness wins the Heart and gains so far upon it as to give greater Concern and Compunction for having abused such a Person's Love, more than because we fear his Power; and we shall forgive ourselves for acting any Baseness against such a Benefactor, with more difficulty than He will forgive us.

WHAT are all the holy and great Perfections of the Deity, if we are never the better for them? His Wisdom would over-reach us in every thing, and be as much dreaded as his Power and Justice, if his Benignity and Goodness did not qualify, endear, and dispense them all unto us. It is that, and that only, gives them a friendly Aspect, and attracts our cordial Love and Esteem.

Love, by its Nature, is a mutual Thing; and therefore on our Part must be founded upon the conscious Effects and Receipt of Love, and Hopes of its Continuance. We can never be brought to love God, till we first believe that He first loved, and still loves us; and the more exceedingly we believe of that, the more ardent and predominant will be the Returns of our Love, and the Attachment of our Gratitude. And when that radical Passion, that Master-Bias of our Constitution has got the Ascendant, and centers, according to its native Instinct, upon its true Object, its best Friend, and supreme Good, every Thing falls under its Command, and into due Subordination: And that Duty which was begun in Fear, the Fear of a Servant towards his Master, ripens into the Love of a Son towards a Father, rises into perfect Freedom and Pleasure, and grows up in us a Principle of Religion, uniform, and lasting. *Herein is the Love of God perfected;*

CHAP. *perfected*; that leading Principle, and great
 XI. Fundamental of Religion, takes the right Hand
 of Fear, and keeps it, as long as we continue in
 Obedience. And being constrain'd by such
 superabounding Goodness of God, and Love of
 Christ, we should love him as our Eyes love
 Light, our Bodies Health, and our Souls Happi-
 ness, *i. e. with all the Heart, with all the Soul,*
with all the Mind.

AND if the Contemplation of the Beauty and
 Benefits of God's Mercies, has, in the Nature of
 Things, a controuling Power to call forth and
 educate that fruitful Principle of Duty, Love,
 and Gratitude: Of all his manifold Goodness
 and Favours, none is to compare to that of our
Redemption; for that improves them all severally,
 and perpetuates them everlastingly unto us.

THAT *Christ Jesus* came into the World to
 save Sinners, is worthy of all Acceptation; an
 Argument adjusted to the Capacity of all Under-
 standings; as well of those that do, as those who
 do not comprehend the manifold Wisdom of that
 Economy. That he died for us whilst we were
 yet Enemies; not our Merits, but our Misery,
 not our Deserts, but our Distress, prevailing
 upon him, is Love more than Human; and
 carries with it such a conquering Attractive, as to
 soften and melt the most obdurate Heart into an
 Impression of Gratitude; it *constrains*, it leads the
 rejoicing Will captive, with visible and with
 honourable Chains.—To lay down his Life for
Enemies! Natural Religion can produce no In-
 stance of Beneficence like this; no Ear ever heard,
 no Eye ever saw, nor had it, nor would it ever
 have enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive
 such

such Love as this, if it had not actually presented
 itself to the Eyes, and Ears, and Hearts of Men:
 Natural Religion has no Goodness, no Mercy,
 no Condescension of God to Man to compare to
 this. Why then do the *Deists* diminish the
 Glory of God's Prudence, and tarnish the bright-
 est Charms of his Goodness; by envying Men
 these inestimable Effects of it; cruelly en-
 deavouring to deprive the World of the most
 generous Motive, most endear'd Reason, and
 most pathetick Argument for loving God? And
 does not this infinite Argument for loving God,
 give an infinite Preference to Christianity above
 Deism? But if that Method fails to mollify and
 dispose them to be reconciled to God, they are
 like to have their foolish appetite, and perverted
 Covetousness of his Wrath, most justly satiated
 with the treasures of its everlasting Pains and
 Penalties.

IT is every way superior to the primæval Fa-
 vour of first bringing us into Being. To give
 the Sentiments and Relish of Life, and of the
 Author of Life, to a Being, that before was de-
 stitute of them, is indeed a Monument of Power
 and Wisdom. But when, by Folly, the En-
 joyments of that Being were impair'd as to this
 Life, and worse than lost as to the next Stage of
 its Existence; to restore to that forfeited Capa-
 city of Happiness, is greater Kindness and Good-
 will, than to bestow what we were not conscious,
 nor expectant of before. And if Well-being
 or Happiness is greater to anxious, miserable
 Being, than Being is to not being, (as it is better
not to be born, than to be ever miserable) the
 Mercy and Goodness that effects that, is the
 most endearing and obliging that can be receiv'd,
 Vol. I. B b or

CHAP. or conceiv'd. It is a Kind of *new* Creation of
 XI. us, and we are accordingly affirmed to be *created*
 again in *Christ Jesus* to good Works, those good
 Works, wherein the Happiness of our Being
 depends for its Qualification.

IF it became the Goodness of God to do that
 merciful Kindness to Men, which was so necessary
 and consequential to his first Favour to their
 Nature; it most certainly becomes his Good-
 ness to *reveal* that his Mercy to as many as He
 would have expressly sensible of the Obligation.
 And this makes a Revelation, having all the re-
 quisite Proofs (as all the *genuine* Works of God
 carry their own Proofs along with them) for
 convincing the Reason, that it comes from God,
 in Opposition to all the Counterfeits of Men;
 as sure and certain, as is the Existence of God.
 And his Goodness being as certain as his Exist-
 ence; they have that moreover to depend upon
 for the Truth of the Revelation, that He would
 not impose upon their Reason. It being as great a
 Contradiction to Reason, and the Nature of God,
 That he should not be able to reveal and commu-
 nicate his Help to his own Creatures, in their
 greatest Distress; That he should be a Lyar when
 he evidently has done so; or can deceive, or be
 deceived, as that he does not exist.

THE blessed Intention of which Revelation
 is to guide us to the Perfection of our Nature,
 and to the Fruition of all Blessedness, by Argu-
 ments drawn, (and such a Draught, were all
 Men of a considering, ingenuous Disposition,
 would be sufficient to persuade) from Considera-
 tions of the superlative Grace, and prodigious
 Love of God and Christ, in the Work of our
 Redemption;

Redemption; *The exceeding Riches of his Grace* CHAP.
made known in his Kindness towards us through Jesus XI.
Christ *. Such Goodness of God was intended to
 lead us to Repentance †. St. Peter referring to
 this Place, account (says he) that the Long-suffering
 of our Lord is Salvation, even as our beloved Bro-
 ther Paul also according to the Wisdom given unto him
 hath written unto you ‡. What one calls Repen-
 tance, the other styles Salvation; because the for-
 mer is the indispensable Way to the latter: And the
 greatest Argument in the World to begin and
 finish it, is that thankful Reasoning upon God's
 most tender and affectionate Goodness in offering
 Salvation; and his Long-suffering waiting for
 our Acceptance of it, the only Friend that stands
 between Sin and its Wages, the Sinner and De-
 struction.

THE engaging Power, the mighty Sweetness,
 and obliging Strength of that gracious Argu-
 ment, is, in a manner, irresistible upon all who
 will bestow the least Attention upon it; and it is
 the most inhuman Disingenuity to abuse an Argu-
 ment drawn from such Goodness, or resist the
 kind Convictions of it. Because the whole Pro-
 ject of such rich Goodness and immense Mercy in
 the Method of Salvation, was only to gain the
 greater Authority to his Laws, to ingratiate him-
 self into Mens Attention, and Affections, that
 they might not so much as find it in their Hearts
 to break them; but, for greater Sureness of
 Compliance, consent to be drawn, and shewn the
 Way to the true End of Man, by the voluntary
 Cords of Man, the soft Cords of Love, and the
 strong Bindings of Gratitude. His Goodness and

* Eph. ii. 7.

† Rom. ii. 4.

‡ 2 Eph. iii. 15.

CHAP. XI. Mercy being full as great an Adversary (though of a different Sort) to Sin and Perverseness, as is his Justice; this enforces a reluctant Dread, that instills an ingenuous Fear of offending a Benefactor, so transcendently generous, that we may be the more addicted to keep his Testimonies, and observe his Laws.

WELL knowing the Principles he embued Man with, he seems to place the Chief of his Power and Sovereignty over us in Acts of Goodness and Loving-Kindnesses; he prefers to captivate the Powers of our Obedience by that Force; and in the Strength, and in the Strivings of such Arguments, desires to triumph over us, only that we might reign with him in Glory. The Prophet requires to *fear God and his Goodness* *; and the Psalmist draws the same natural and ingenuous Conclusion: *There is Mercy or Forgiveness with thee, that thou mightest be feared* †; and from his gracious Readiness to forgive, infers, *therefore shall every one pray unto thee in a Time when thou may'st be found* ‡. Whoever tramples upon the Goodness of God, tramples upon God himself; and he that slights the Present, slights the Donor.

IN giving his Son to die for us, how shall he not with him freely give us all Things? In giving the Fountain and Foundation of his Mercies, the Streams follow of Course. God and Christ have laid such infinite Obligations upon us, that we must be false to all that is grateful, just, or rational in Human Nature, as many as think of no Returns. Who can disallow the Equity, or not dread the apostolical Condemnation; if any Man

* Hof. iii. 5. † Psalm cxxxiv. 4. ‡ Psalm xxxiii. 6.
loves

loves not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema CHAP. XI.
Maranatha *; he is cursed among Men, he is abandon'd from the Principles of human Nature.

AND very justly does our Lord declare, *he that loveth Father or Mother, Son or Daughter more than him, is not worthy of him* †: For had they all been willing to be sacrificed for the Sin of the Soul, it would have signify'd just nothing. Greater Love than this hath no Man, to lay down his Life for his Friend; but herein, above all Men, hath Christ magnify'd his Love; that, while we were yet Enemies, he dy'd for us. From being Slaves to Sin and Satan, he ransom'd and adopted us to the Freedom, and to the Acceptableness of being Sons of God, and joint Heirs with himself of the purchased Inheritance: He made himself low and poor, a Curse and a Reproach, that he might exalt us to heavenly Treasure, and bless us with Glory. He gets us Pardon for our Sin, and in the Way he got it, wins more upon the Sinner, and gains his Heart, than to be forgiven, as often as we offended, upon mere saying we repented. All the Invitations to returning Sinners in the new Testament are grounded upon this Belief of Christ for the Remission of Sins; and in the old Testament upon the Hopes in him.

IF the Mercy of God always consults and advises with his Wisdom and Justice, to imagine (as some do) that Christ, in offering up his Sacrifice to God, address'd it only to his Mercy, by Way of Prayer and Supplication to forgive the Sins of Men, and not to the Vindication of his Honour and Justice, is to make a Distinction with-

* 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

† Mat. x. 37.

out a Reason. For then his Prayer and Supplication for the Pardon of the Sins of the World might have sufficed without the Sacrifice of himself. But we find that strong Cries and Tears, and the most vehement Supplication could not avail for himself, much less for the World. Besides, the Time of praying the Father in Behalf of the Sins of Men, was to succeed after that, and be offer'd up in Virtue of the Sacrifice he *had* made. Justice for promoting Obedience by coercing Disobedience, is *suo jure*, as necessary to the Idea of a Governor; as Punishment is to Laws; and Laws to Government; or the Idea of being govern'd by God is to Mankind. Therefore Goodness arm'd with Justice, like a Loadstone armed with Iron, vastly increases its attracting Power.

THIS is such a captivating Argument for the Love of God, as natural Religion is a Stranger to; and consequently a Stranger to the highest Reason, the noblest, the freest, and most obedient Principle of Religion. For so much as is denied to, or diminish'd from the Goodness of God in this Dispensation, so much is denied of, or taken from the Reason and Ground of loving God. For which Reason there is so little mention of the Love of God among the Heathen *Moralists*. Some of them (the *Platonists*) had a Notion of the absolute Goodness of God, as the *chief Good*, the original Beauty and Harmony: But as to his *Relative* Goodness, and the practical Influences of that, though the Deity was continually pouring his natural Benefits upon Men, they were in a manner silent, and the Heathen World unthankful.

THEY

THEY basely robb'd Him of that endearing Obligation of Duty, and by doing so, endeavour'd to put out his Name from under Heaven; by disregarding that Beneficence whereby he would make himself known unto all Men, and tie all down to a natural Obedience to Him. And is not the superabounding Mercy and Goodness of God in the Redemption of the World, more attracting of Love, more influencing of Gratitude, and more persuasive of Obedience, than the *Deists* Participation of *common* Goodness over all Creatures, without Distinction of the Good from the Bad, or those who were better than the worst, among Men? Were they true to their Endeavours of adhering, in practice, to the Law of Nature, they would gladly embrace the best Means, and the most cogent Principle, for putting *Christianity* in practice; but, as they contemptuously slight this, it gives a well-grounded Jealousy, that they really, and at the Bottom, slight and disregard that Religion of Nature, which they pretend to reverence, and extol.

Is it not best for the World, is it not happy for them in particular to receive such a Religion, as removes that natural Anxiety and Enmity of Mind, which arises out of a Sense of Guilt, by a Propitiation of God's own providing, without any Cost to them? Or are they angry, because He makes the first Overture for Peace and Reconciliation, in the Method of the Christian Salvation? Or for proposing to become their endeared Father, and have no Enmity against them, but on account of their Sins; which Sins, he would willingly also transfer upon his Son, if they would be willing to submit to *Him*; and be led

B b 4

with

with alacrity by that Goodness to Repentance; and so recover themselves from Bondage; and so be invested with all the Treasures of Happiness their Nature is capable of?

IF they undertake Repentance, in earnest, as they pretend to say they do, they must undertake the Belief of that which gives assured Efficacy to it, *i. e.* Remission of Sins; otherwise they are guilty of the reproaching Absurdity of omitting that, without which the other Undertaking would signify nothing. But it is impossible for their own Reasoning upon the Goodness of God, to make them as certain of that, as if He had expressly made a *Proclamation* of such an Act of Grace, especially when there is a well proved Revelation on foot, which actually declares it upon the high Privilege of a Covenant, and upon easy Conditions, that are the Freedom and Perfection of their Nature. The Freedom of the Sons of God is perfect Freedom; and that is brought to all the Faculties of the Children of Men, when their Understanding obeys the Faith, and becomes Disciple to the Doctrine of Christ, their Will obeys in chusing his Way to Life; and their Affections are ready to love him.

IF an unknown Friend should leave them a vast Estate, at his Death, upon Condition of changing their Name, and preserving a solemn Remembrance of him, and undertaking to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present World; would they reject the Offer, or think themselves unworthy of it, purely because the Conditions are so easy and so entirely reasonable? Or, should any of them be enslaved by wild

I

Barbarians,

Barbarians, and a Person generously offers to ransom them, would they refuse, merely because they did not send for him? Or, if by rebellious Practices they had fallen under the heavy Displeasure of their Prince, would they be disgusted at Him, because he proposed to accept of his own Son, who offer'd Himself a Mediator with his Father for them, to procure their Peace, and introduce them again to his Presence, and to wonted Favour?

THEY say, they are altogether for a Religion, where every thing is govern'd, order'd, and regulated *for the best*, wherein God does not act according to mere *Will* or *Fancy*, but confines himself to the best. Or, according to the polite Words of a noble Author, "To believe that every thing is govern'd, order'd, or regulated *for the best*, by a designing Principle, or Mind, necessarily good and permanent, is to be a perfect *Theist*." "Upon the whole (describing *Theism*, p. 71.) he has a firm Belief of a God, whom he does not merely call good, but of whom in reality he believes *nothing beside* real Good." "To believe the governing Mind, or Minds not absolutely or necessarily Good, nor confined to what is best, but capable of acting according to mere *Will* or *Fancy*, is to be a *Dæmonist* *". He afterwards describes "*Theism* as it stands in Opposition to *Dæmonism*, and denotes *Goodness* in the superior Deity †." Which plainly insinuates, that Christianity, as it differs from *Theism*, does not denote Goodness in the Deity, and therefore is *Dæmonism*, and to be a Christian the same thing as

* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 11† *Id.* pag. 13. Notes.a *Dæmonist*;

CHAP. a Dæmonist; the *Author of Christianity asold*, &c.
XI. quotes this † Passage with Triumph.

IN Answer to which; does it not evidently appear that God has actually govern'd, order'd, and regulated every thing *for the best*, and design'dly *confined* Himself to what is so, and acted nothing from mere *Will or Fancy*, in our Redemption by *Christ Jesus*? Has he not conducted every Step of that Affair from the first to the last, in every Particular, in all the Incidents, in every Circumstance, by the profoundest Wisdom; by an exact Adjustment to, by the truest Consultation of both the Nature of God, and the Nature of Man; in accepting the Surety of the Mediator; in appointing Him to come into the World; in the admirable Union of his Divine and Human Nature; and in the faithful Execution of all his beneficial Offices? Here is as much Beauty and Harmony to be found in the Restoration and Government of the moral World, if the *noble Author* had bestow'd a little Consideration on it, as he found in the Conduct of the natural World, to make him turn a sober Believer, which is better than an *Enthusiast* in the Contemplation*. The Consideration would have kindled his Love, and he would have been honour'd with the Love and Effects of that Wisdom and Goodness that was concern'd therein. *Cicero* acknowledg'd such a Force in the very Words *οὐκ ᾔστεν οὐκ ᾔστεν*, that he knew not well how to render it.

AND not only of Divine Wisdom, but is there not moreover an undeniable Profusion

† *Charact.* Vol. II. p. 157.

* See His *Rhapsody*.
upon

upon Men, of Divine Condescension, Love, CHAP.
Mercy, Goodness, in the greatest Variety of XI.
endearing Kindnesses, and obliging Benefits? Is it from the mere *Will and Fancy* of God, or is it not the glorious Effect and Consequence of His *rational, permanent* Goodness, that He has consulted the Good, and acted *for the best* in such numerous Benefits and Privileges that accompany so great a Salvation? If God in his Mercy will give his Son unto Death, to save the World, will they be the Persons who throw back his Gift (a greater than which He could not bestow) in his Face? By doing which they must necessarily perish, and keep no Measures with Him, though all his Measures for their Salvation are altogether for their Good? If the Beneficence of God is a Reason to love him much, and be very thankful, what other Instance can be equal to *this* surprising Effect of it?

WHEN they may partake of the saving Advantage, what is that to them, what Reason of Refusal ought it to be to them, that a *third* Person suffer'd so very much for their Safety? Is it that they are, in their own Opinion, below, or above accepting such a Favour from God? If *below*; how came they, all of a sudden, to shrink themselves into such a despicable State, merely out of Crossness; when it is well known, there are no Persons upon Earth, who have an higher Conceit of themselves, than themselves? If *above*; then they make the Dictates of their own Understanding and Reason superior to their Maker's, who gave them their Understanding; they enter their Protest against the Counsels and Determinations of Heaven; throw off their Dependence, and declare their no occasion for such Fa-

CHAP. XI. Favours and Bounties. So that either way, it is they themselves, out of their mere *Will* and *Fancy*, who stint and strangle the divinest Influence of the Goodness of God, and cruelly to themselves, and maliciously to the World, stop up the richest, the most salutiferous Channel of that Fountain of Human Happiness that flows upon the Children of Men. At the same time, they pretend to magnify and praise it above all things, and set up to be *Theists* by denoting the *Goodness* of the Deity, and making Notes and Comments upon it. But their evil Communications and false Notions of the Goodness of God beget bad Manners, in calling those *Dæmonists*, and that *Dæmonism*, which has the Charity to forgive them.

WHAT seems to mislead them most, as well as others, who deny the Divine Nature, and its Union with the Human, in our Mediator, is the Opinion that it is mean and degrading for the Son of God to become Man. The like Sentiment was the Occasion of the Heathens substituting false Mediators, and crediting *Dæmons* with that Office, whom they fancied to be of a middle State and Circumstance, inferior to the Gods, and superior to Man, but partaking of neither of their Natures. But it is a Sign these Persons have little studied God, his Goodness, his Power, or his Greatness, else they would never entertain such a stingy, incredulous Opinion of *Meanness* in such a Condescension in the Son of God. If they account it honourable and glorious in one like themselves, to stoop to relieve the Misery of a Fellow-Creature, and put themselves to some Inconvenience in doing it, or postpone their own Advantage and Convenience to the Good of

of the Publick, and call the Action Heroick, CHAP. XI. Godlike; why not allow God, infinitely more inclin'd to such Acts, to send his Son; and his Son to condescend to take our Nature upon Him to save a World of perishing Sinners; When the Father, who best understands what is true Greatness and Glory, places both of them in being *Good*; and as a Proof of that, in condescending Acts of *doing Good*; and the Son places his Glory, in that Opportunity of going about upon our Earth, *doing Good*, and ministring, rather than being ministred unto.

So very credible is the Goodness of God in the Redemption of Man, that it is but pursuing the same Good-will that first created him, and shewing *Mercy* where he had shew'd Goodness before. And, indeed, the due belief of the Divine Goodness together with the internal Evidence of the Doctrines, and Commandments, all breathing the same Divine Goodness unto Man, without any *mere Will*, *Arbitrariness*, or commanding for *commanding Sake* is in a manner a compleat Proof and Security of the Truth of the Christian Revelation. It is the contrary groundless Supposition that has had the fatal influence upon Deists, or Scepticks, to reject that Revelation; and make good that Observation of our Author, *pag. 368*. "If once pernicious Opinions are believed to be contained in any Revelation, they will have the same Effect, as if they really were there."

How unkind both to God and Man, are these other Passages? "If there is a Religion which teaches Adoration and Love of a *God*, whose Character it is to be captious, and of high Re-

"sentiment,

CHAP. XI. "sentment, subject to Wrath and Anger, furious, revengeful, and revenging himself when offended, upon others than those who gave Offence,—must of Necessity raise even Approbation and Respect towards the Vices of this Kind*." If by insensible Degrees, as he proceeds in his religious Faith, and devout Exercise, he comes to be more and more reconciled to Malignity, Arbitrariness, Partiality, or Revengefulness of his beloved Deity, his Reconciliation with these Qualities themselves will soon grow in Proportion; and the most cruel, unjust, and barbarous Acts shall by the Power of this Example, be often consider'd by him, not only as just and lawful, but as Divine and worthy of Imitation †.

THE noble Author's Compliment of *Wrath, Anger, Revenge*, or revenging himself upon others than those who gave the Offence, can mean none but the God of the *Christians*: But that has been fully answer'd before. And as he puts the Truth of the premised Accusation upon the Truth of the Consequence among Christians, which he says must of Necessity follow as to *Approbation* and *Respect* towards those Vices; so far, as often to be consider'd, by the Power of such Example, not only as just and lawful, but as Divine, and worthy of Imitation. Now, if this Consequence is utterly false, in fact, it shews that his Premises are no better; and his calumnious Insult of the God of the Christians, and his Worshipers, is very injurious, and unbecoming a Gentleman, who seems to distinguish his Spirit and Style chiefly by the grand, I won't call it *noble*, Artifices of uttering

* *Characterist.* Vol. II. page. 48. † *Vid.* page. 49.

many

many bitter, false Things under genteel Periods, and polite Diction; as if the harmonious Order, and the taking, pretty Figures of *misrepresenting* Words, was the same Thing, or better, than the Beauty and Order of right Ideas, and through the Help of them the Investigation of the Truth of Things of the greatest Concernment.

FOR who ever yet heard of any offended Christians revenging themselves upon others than those who gave the Offence, in *Imitation* of the God they worship? It is too true, that Wrath, Revenge, Fury, and even Barbarity is too much found among some degenerate Christians: But neither among that worst Faction of Christians, is that cruel persecuting Spirit inspir'd, in fact, by a genuine Imitation of, or Conscience towards God; but rather from their enslav'd Conscience towards their tyrannical Rulers, who, in the Place of God, lord it over their Conscience; and having taken away the Book of his Will from them, in all their *peculiar* Doctrines, conspiring to aggrandize their *peculiar* Dominion, have the undisturb'd Opportunity of telling their ignorant Vassals what is *their own* Will, instead of his, for suppressing all Opposers, i. e. *Heretical Pravity*; and under the false Colour of God's Sake, inflaming them to the proper Rage of executing their Purpose, and doing any manner of Evil for *their Sake*, always couch'd under the *Good of the Church*, which, in that depraved Communion, are synonymous Words. This is such notorious Matter of Fact, that it would be an Affront to a *Protestant* Reader to offer to prove it. This very Author, and his Disciple, the Author of *Christianity as old, and the Rights of the Church*, &c. confirm

CHAP. firm the same abundantly, and descant upon it in
XI. Pages without Number. So that I can't imagine,
what Sort of Christians the noble Person meant,
who are in Danger of degenerating into those an-
tichristian Vices, merely by worshipping and imi-
tating their God. Perhaps he thought of the
rigid predestinarian Principle; but exceeding few,
at this Time, adhere to that; and that only pro-
duces a fowre Face, and uncharitable Speeches;
but no Blows.

So overflowing moreover has been the Stream
of Divine Goodness in the Redemption of the
World; that there is more Good redounds to
Man, by this Method of rich Grace; and to the
Deity more Glory, and Illustration of Divine
Perfections, than if Man had never fallen. When
Man had sought out many Devices in his State of
Probation, and lost all his Prospects in the Fa-
vour of his Maker; what Revenge, what For-
feiture does the God of all Goodness take of it;
but to provide him a Mediator, and by his Means,
to raise him only the higher from his Fall? From
a Servant, his State under the first Covenant, to
be under the Second, a *Friend* of God, nay, his
adopted *Son*; which gives Man, who has no
Hand in his own Birth, the most endearing
Sense of Choice, and the most obliging Sentiment
of *Father*, beyond the common Notion of *Maker*,
wherewith the *Deists* content themselves. Friend-
ship, if we consider of it, is the best thing Man
has to bestow upon Man, or Angel upon Angel
or Man; but through the Mediator God does
not only bestow that, but *Sonship* moreover upon
us Men: *behold what manner of love is that, that
we should be called the Sons of God!*

THOUGH

THOUGH the moral Law is not abrogated,
the Rigor of obedience is so temper'd and mo-
derated by the second Covenant; that Repentance
and Sincerity are accepted, instead of perfect
obedience, and accounted of God, through
Christ, as *that Righteousness* which is equivalent
to Innocence; by which Allowance the Law is as
well adjusted now to our (imperfect) Compliance
in the best of our present Ability, as it was at
first to Man's perfect Obedience, when he was in
the Perfection of his original Powers. Had per-
fect Obedience been required in the Second, as in
the first Covenant, the Perfection of all our Fa-
culties must have been restored; and then every
Sin in peccable Man would have brought on the
Necessity of *another* Mediator; after that, as
Folly prevail'd, *another*, and so *toties quoties*.
Nor is there any Yoke laid upon the Neck of our
Appetites and Passions, but Reason concurs in
laying the very same; whilst the Honour and
Reward of virtuous Performance is enhanced
from the surrounding Difficulties without, and
the treacherous Inclinations within. The Reve-
lation of that Covenant brings with it large Im-
provements to our Reason, by many profitable
Discoveries, totally undiscoverable without it;
and the Assurance of the Advancement and Ex-
altation of our Nature, in both its Constituents,
incomparably beyond what it was at first.

THE Body then in its Similitude and Affe-
ctions, was the same with the Body now; but at
its *Resurrection*, which is a new Acquisition by the
Redemption of it from the Grave, it will be more
than recover'd to its pristine State in *Paradise*,
beyond the Health and Vigor of its first Con-
dition;

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CHAP. XI. dition; without any carnal Affections, and with Lustre and Glory equal to one of the celestial Luminaries: When there will be to both Body and Soul, Enjoyment of *eternal* Life in *Heaven*, in the Glories and Felicities of that Place; immortal Happiness given through the second *Adam* is transcendently greater and more complete in *celestial* Heaven, and better tasted from the Foil of felt Mortality, past Grief, Disturbance, and Tribulation. Whereas in Paradise, there was no Promise, unless imply'd, or Assurance of any more than an inferior, perpetuated Life upon Earth. Man is therefore a Gainer every Way by the Fall, if it is not his own Default, *i. e.* if he will not still continue the Fall of our first Parents, by the Favour of our Redeemer, and by the Providence of that Almighty and most merciful Father, whose sole Prerogative it is to bring Good out of Evil, and make the arising Good surpass the Evil: All the time the Aim and Essence of the *Devil* is to pervert Good always, and endeavour to bring Evil out of it continually.

CAN'T the *Deist* then bear the Burthen of Obligation, and Dependance upon Heaven, in being overcome with Kindnesses; is that a proper Return, *ubi multa beneficia anteverere, pro gratia odium redditur?* whilst the present inflicted Labour and Travail serve to keep the Body in breathing Health, during its Stay here below: Civil Government, that arises out of the Disorder of Passions, teaches Subjection to Laws, and restrains from many enormous Transgressions: And the Train of natural Evils, promiscuously distributed, weans the Mourner from the Love of this World, cures him from disquieting himself in vain in seeking after Good in its Possessions, or any

any of its Magnificences, and sends him to his Prayers to that superintending Being, who will shew them Good, Solid, Stable, Satisfying, that shall be proper for their State, for ever. And that absent Good will make them more subject to, and dependant upon God, on whom they rely for their Happiness. A Failure in which Dependance first introduced that Evil, out of which arose that wonderful (and otherwise undiscoverable) Display of the Divine Goodness and exuberant Excellencies through the Mediator, for advancing Man to higher Happiness from his Fall. What was said upon another Occasion, may be apply'd to *Eve*: *Si non errasset, feceret illa minus.*

IF the *Deists* therefore have any true Respect for their old Friend, and dear Favourite, the *Body*, they would come into this Method, for the Sake of its glorious future Improvement. Or, if they have any Value for *eternal* Life in *Heaven*, as who in their Senses, in this Vale of Misery, will not pant after that? Here is the Door to enter in; and it is mine, and I hope every Christian's hearty Desire, and Prayer, that they may enter in, before the late Hour comes, when it will be shut against them. For such is the Misfortune, or rather Malediction on their present groveling Principles, that they have no Regard what shall be the future State of their Body; its *Resurrection* to them, not believing in their Redeemer, must be full as great an Absurdity as it ever was to all Heathen Reasoners. And the future State of the Happiness of their Soul, as designed and intended by them, seems to be a very precarious Hope and Consequence from their Principles: And so they are false to both

CHAP. XI. Parts of that Nature, which they carry about with them, and adore.

THEY don't deny the Immortality of the Soul, rather give out general Words of leaving the Providence for its Condition hereafter to God. But their Principles don't allow them to be very solicitous, how they shall fare in another World. For as they generally found their Law of Nature in the Consideration of God having made Man a rational, and a sociable Creature, a Member of a Community; the Duties which flow from that, may all be directed and intended to terminate in this World only: Self Preservation, Government of the Passions, Temperance, Fortitude, Fidelity, Truth, Justice, Peace, Mercy in forgiving Enemies, and relieving the Necessitous, and Benevolence, in wishing well to all. And for these Obligations, they make themselves accountable only to the co-temporary Reason of others of the same Society; not to the Heavenly Founder and Governor of that Society diffus'd as it is over the face of the Earth.

BUT how little do they consider themselves as made for *Religion*, or accountable to God hereafter for their Actions here: That would introduce *positive* Rewards and Punishments; which can't be admitted into their Scheme, as long as they reject Revelation, whence only they can be certainly known.

“THOUGH human Law-givers (says the Author of *Christianity*, &c. pag. 22.) are forced to have Recourse to Punishments, which are not connected with the Things they forbid; yet

“yet a Being of infinite Power is not thus CHAP. XI. streighten'd, but may make one the necessary Consequence of the other: And, indeed, how can it be otherwise, since Good and Evil have their Foundation in the essential Difference of Things, and their Nature is fix'd and immovable: And consequently our Happiness depends on the intrinsic Nature of the one, and our Misery on the intrinsic Nature of the other.” And pag. 332. “'Tis the View with which an Action is done, that makes it moral: He who pays his Debts out of a Principle of Honesty, does a moral Action; while he, who does the same for fear of the Law, can't be said to act morally: And can he, who does a Thing to avoid being punish'd, or in Hopes of being rewarded hereafter; and for the same Reason is ready to do the contrary; *Merit*, at least, equally with him, who is in Love with his Duty, and is govern'd, not by servile Motives, but by the original Obligation of the moral Fitness of Things, in Conformity to the Nature, and in Imitation of the perfect Will of God? — They who do not act thus, deserve not the Title of *true Deists*,” where it appears they pretend to *Merit* of Heaven, by their Conduct of being Deists. And, indeed, they must be allow'd to have a great Share of *Merit*, so long as they continue to make a *Merit* of their *Vices*.

AND as they neither observe the Law of Nature, nor perform moral Virtue, with respect to another World; nor place them to God's Account, as Obedience to his Laws requiring it, with no Intention to his Service, nor any Prospect of his rewarding Favour; what Regard should

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XI.

should God and another World have to them hereafter, when they have so little to either of them here? They please themselves in doing what they do, as rational, sociable Creatures; They receive not the Law of Nature from Heaven as a Rule of Duty, or as any Prescription for bringing them thither; nor does their System put them in Mind of any such Hopes, or oblige them to any such Thoughts, of expressly pursuing a future Felicity after Death. They can't bear to be told by their own Servants, that there is no need of their Interposition, when those Servants are actually doing their Work wrong, or by Halves: Yet they expect that Heaven will not only bear with the Mockery of their Remonstrance, and the Ridicule of their Refusal of its kind Interposal, for conducting them thither, and informing their Actions aright; but also find them a Place there moreover, and put them into a Post to dispute against God there, as they do here.

IF this is the Secret of modern Deism; these the best Prospects drawn from the *natural* Goodness of God; it would be happy for every Body to keep out of it, and despise these low Offers made to human Nature, as many as have the Light of the Gospel, and the *Glory* of the Divine Goodness, and all the Divine Attributes, shining in the *Face*, or Person of *Jesus Christ**, and *may behold the Glory of the Lord with open Face*†. How happy is it for Christians, that by his Mediation, the *Glory* of God, and their own eternal Good are so inseparably connected together, that while they pursue the Qualifications for their future Felicity, according to his Directions, they at the same time, and by the very same Observances, act for the *Glory* of God? FOR

* 2 Cor. iv. 6.

† iii. 18.

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FOR as he designed them that Happiness thro' the Mediator, the answering up to that Design, and not disappointing him of their best Endeavours, and doing what they do in the Name of the Mediator, glorifies him who laid that Design, and appointed that Mediator for assisting them to carry it on. And thus carrying in their Actions a Reference to the future World, what centers in their own Enjoyment, centers also in the *Glory* of God; where their future Praises will be as liberal and everlasting, as their Happiness received. Nay, whilst they have Respect to the Recompence of Reward animating them in arduous Virtue, they glorify him who set the Reward for that Purpose: And all who fall short of intending their future Felicity by their present Behaviour, fall short of the *Glory* of God. Why are the inanimate Heavens said to *declare the Glory of God*, but by the Regularity of the Motions of those Bodies to their designed *End*, according to their original Destination? The same may be said of the admirable Beauties, and adequate Uses in the Composition of the Works beneath.

FOR it is made an express Instance of *pleasing God*, to come to him, and diligently seek him in Virtue of that Faith, that he is a *Rewarder* of those that do so; that he receives no Advantage, no *Glory* by it; but merely as we receive *all* the Advantage, and *all* our Happiness from it, and without *such* a Faith, it is affirmed to be *impossible to please* God and consequently, there is no Probability of pleasing him by any other Sort of Notions of bringing *Glory* to him exclusive of the Aim of our own Happiness; which to pursue in the Qualifications he has prescribed, is the

greatest Pleasure, and greatest Glory of our Father which his in Heaven. All Duty is summ'd up in the Love of God, and our Neighbour ; Why ? but because that is so laid in our Interest and our Happiness, that we may look upon it as an Effect depending on the other as its Cause. For, as our Happiness and well-being wholly depend upon the Help and Assistance of God, and Man ; the Love of each must be the truest Way of securing the Help and Assistance of both ; as the Hatred or Neglect of either terminate in our Loss or Destruction from one, or both. To love God and Man is the same Thing as to love our own Good in the truest Import ; that, and the Effects of that being the Virtue, Disposition, or *Qualification* for our Happiness, the more Men abound in those Virtues and Qualifications, the more they glorify their Father in Heaven. *Gloria est consentiens laus bonorum, incorrupta vox bene judicantium de eccellente virtute.* Cic. Lib. II. de Invent. And whoever promotes that in others, which undoubtedly advances their present, and their future Happiness, promotes the Glory of God both in himself, and in others. But he that disregards the Pursuit of his own Salvation, in the Use of those Means, and all Persuasion to give Attention to them from those, who beseech them in Christ's Stead to be reconciled to God and their own Happiness, reject the Mediator, dishonour God, and have no Respect to his Glory, or his Counsel towards them. So true is the Connection ; *he that despiseth you, despiseth me ; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me ** : And the Despiser is guilty of *despising, not Man, but God†* ; and not God's Authority only, but the *Riches of his Goodness* also ‡.

* Luke. x. 16.

† 1 Thes. iv. 8.

‡ Rom. 11. 4.

CHAP. XII.

*The INTERCESSION of our MEDIATOR
in Heaven : Where he reigns a KING,
till he comes again to JUDGE the World.*

THE Redemption of the World being finish'd by the Death of the Mediator ; *he was raised from the Dead*, to demonstrate apparently to the World God's *Acceptance* of the Oblation of himself for the Sins of it. A Demonstration of the shortest Reasoning, and clearest Evidence that Matter of Fact is capable of ; Recorded, not only in the most authentick History that can be given of it, to future Generations ; but, as a Matter of the highest and most constant Importance, by a *weekly* Commemoration moreover, as well as *annual* : The religious Observance of the last Day of the Week being purposely alter'd to the *first* ; and the Name of the *Lord's Day* given to it, in everlasting Token of such a Salvation, even to those who can't read. The first Day of the Week commemorates the first Day's Creation, *let there be Light, and there was Light*. So likewise let there be a Recovery of Man by *Jesus Christ*, and it was so, in due time, by his *Resurrection from the dead*.

He ascended, not secretly, but openly, in Circumstances of great Glory, to the Right Hand

CHAP. XII. Hand of God. He came forth from the Father, and came into the World a Plenipotentiary from Him; He again left the World, and return'd to the Father a Plenipotentiary from Man, to mediate with God in his behalf, and there continue a Priesthood *for ever* after the Order of *Melchisedeck*. And as he left a perpetual Memorial of his Death, upon Earth, in the Lord's Supper; so he makes a perpetual Memorial of it in Heaven, by presenting his Blood. And there He remains a perpetual, and most puissant Security to Man, of all the Benefits of his Passion, to guarantee the Remission of Sins; the Resurrection of the Body; the promis'd Inheritance, Everlasting Life; and the Promise of the Father, the Fellowship of the *Holy Ghost*, to all that shall obey him. For, as the Apostle argues, *if when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his Life**, a Life that *lives for ever, to make Intercession for us*. He had said before†, *We have Peace with God thro' our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have Access by Faith to this Grace, [of Peace] wherein we stand.*

HIS Human Nature was the proper Subject of his Exaltation; in his Humiliation it was cloath'd with Mortality, and the Form of a Servant as an outward Vesture: At his Exaltation, he put off that Vesture, and cloath'd the Human Nature with his Immortality, and cover'd and adorn'd its Immortality with Robes of Glory and Majesty. Before I treat of the Ends and Benefits of his *Ascension*, it may be proper to consider some Circumstances of it.

* Rom. v. 10.

† v. 1, 2.

He is represented to have ascended above all Heavens, higher than the Heavens; to be taken into Glory, into the most excellent Glory, and to the Right Hand of God, and there to sit: Undoubtedly signifying, that He is exalted to that very inaccessible Light where God dwelleth, that all blessed and all glorious Place, where there are many blissful Mansions. The highest Residence, the chiefest Station whereof is justly given to Him, *whom in all Things it becometh to have the Prebeminence**, for his mighty suffering upon Earth for Man's Salvation: *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing†*. This Dignification of him above every Name, and Inauguration into a Kingdom and Governance over all, is familiarly represented to our earthy Conceptions by *sitting at the Right Hand of God*.

FOR as the Right Hand of this World's Monarchs is the chiefest Place of Honour and Distinction; after the like manner is the glorified Jesus at God's Right Hand, at the right hand of his Power, and of his Throne, and in many Places said to *sit* there; which seems to imply the firm Possession and durable Continuance of that glorious State; or the Honourable Posture of a *Judge* which is that of *sitting*: For he is constituted our Ruler and Judge, and there he sits in the Throne of his Majesty. One Place there is ‡ where St. Stephen is said to have *seen the Glory of God, and Jesus standing at his Right Hand*; which Change of Posture seems to denote the

* Col. i. 18.

† Rev. v. 12.

‡ Acts vii. 56.

CHAP. ready Assistance of his distressed Servants; as if
XII. he had risen off his Seat, to plead for them with
his Father.

THE first blessed End of his ascending into Heaven was, that he might send the *Holy Ghost* the Comforter. So he open'd the matter to his Disciples, and blam'd their arising Sorrow at the news of his Departure, with an Assurance *That it is expedient for you that I go away* in order to send Him; and if *I go not away the Comforter will not come* †: And elsewhere ‡ *the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified*; i. e. the Holy Spirit was not yet imparted, and become the explicit Right of Men, in vertue of the Divine Promise and Engagement enacted in the Gospel Covenant, till all Things belonging to the Mediator of that Covenant were fully completed. 'Tis true, the Communications of the Spirit of Grace and Comfort were gratuitously imparted to several before, and under the Dispensation of *Moses*; and seems to have been given to some out of that Law. But it did not properly belong to that Œconomy; there was no Claim of Right, nor any Expectation of fulfilling the Promise, but in vertue of the future ensuing Dispensation of the Messiah, *Jesus Christ*, who brought Grace and Truth. Then the Spirit of God explicitly became the great and glorious Condition of the New Covenant. And God bound himself in the Justice of Promise, and the Obligation of Covenant, to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him, in the Mediator's Name. The Prayers and Supplications of such Votaries will ever have a Right to the special

† *John*. xvi. 7.‡ *vii*. 32.

Influences

Influences and Comforts of that Holy Spirit, CHAP.
and to the Increase thereof, according to their XII.
actual Improvements under what is given. But
the first extraordinary Effusion of that celestial
Spring of Gifts unto Men, was to be the Effect,
and Consequence of our Mediator's Prayers
and Intercession to the Father for it: *I will
pray the Father, and He shall give you another Com-
forter* *.

AND that first Instance of his prevailing Intercession (a surprizing Token of its Efficacy) commenc'd, when he was received up into Glory, and enter'd within the Vail; and had presented the Blood of Atonement, for making up the Breaches, and cementing the Friendship between God and Man. In return of which, as a demonstrative Attestation of a perfect Reconciliation, and Peace effected, and concluded, Kings upon their solemn taking Possession of their Dignity being wont to bestow Gifts and Largesses; the most extraordinary of the *Holy Ghost*, were pour'd out upon the then Disciples; and the Love of God shed abroad upon the Hearts of all Believers, by the same Spirit, which is given unto us; whose blessed Comforts were design'd a lasting Joy, that *Joy in the Holy Ghost*, which, together with Peace and Righteousness, is constitutive of the Kingdom of God †, to continue our Peace with God; and be with us moreover in the Nature of a Seal and Earnest of our future Inheritance, until the time the purchased Possession comes. *When he ascended up on High, He accordingly led Captivity captive, and gave Gifts unto Men* ‡.

* *John* xiv. 16.† *Rom*. xiv. 17.‡ *Eph*. iv. 8.

I

AFTER

AFTER the Mediator had left the World, and was gone to the Father, the Mission of the Holy Ghost was the most honourable Testimonial that could be sent down from Heaven, or received upon Earth, of the Mediator's certain Arrival there, after his Departure from Earth. And, as that most excellent Gift comprehensively includes all gifts and blessings; it is fit, that He, who was the procuring Cause, should send it, as well as the Father. Thus he had declar'd, *He shall glorify me, for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you* *. And when He, the Holy Ghost, is come, *He shall reprove the World of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgment* †. Of the Sin of not believing on him, the Sin of dishonouring, and the Sin of disobeying him. Of *Righteousness*; because He went to the Father, an incontestable Vindication that He could be no Impostor; but was truly righteous, and undoubtedly innocent, in all Conversation; was it otherwise, the righteous Father would not have receiv'd Him, much less given such Proofs to the World, of his being well-pleased with Him. Of *Judgment*; because He is appointed the Judge of the Prince of this World, and of all the Men and Spirits, who submit to his Mis-rule. Of all which Things the World was reprov'd, and convinc'd of the Reproof by the Miracles, by the Preaching, and by the Writings of the Apostles, wrought, inspired, dictated by the Holy Ghost.

AND what more marvellous Display could there be to the then World, of the Heavenly

* John xvi. 14.

† v. 8, &c.

Power

Power of the *departed* Mediator, being so powerfully Resiant still in *Spirit* with his Disciples, as to enable them, according to Promise, to do greater Wonders and Miracles than he Himself perform'd, whilst present in Body? He the *Spirit* was to be a Principle of *New Birth* in the Baptismal Water, to a World *Spiritually* dead in Trespases and Sins; he, the *Pareclete*, was to advocate and promote the Cause of Christ with Men, as his Vicegerent on Earth; whilst Christ himself was gone to advocate the Cause of us Men with the Father; and to act under Him in all the Affairs of his Kingdom, for the Furtherance of Mens Salvation, till he brings all his faithful Followers to the Glory he is gone before to prepare for them. By this Spirit, when two or three are met together, there is He in the midst of them. By the same Spirit is maintain'd that vital Union, and Communion, that is so necessary between the Head and the Members, the Vine and the Branches. By which vital Powers, and spiritual Comforts, all the desirable Ends of his Presence upon Earth are better answered, and to more Advantage, and better Effect to his Followers, than in a visible Manifestation of his Person. For that was more necessary to *appear for us* before God: And when the *Judge himself* appears for the Criminal, in how fair a Way is the Criminal to be acquitted? With respect to which Presence, He is affirm'd *to have enter'd into Heaven, now to appear in the Presence of God for us* *.

THERE was another End of his Ascension; that having, by his Resurrection, conquer'd

* Heb. ix. 25.

him

CHAP. him *who had the Power of Death, the Devil, he*
 XII. might triumph, like a Conqueror, over him,
 and all the Principalities and Powers of-darkness;
 and make a shew of them openly in leading Cap-
 tivity captive: And might receive, in just Re-
 compence to his grievous Indurances, the Re-
 ward of his Passion, and the Travail of his Soul.
 It was meet and fit, that the mighty Condescen-
 sion in emptying himself of Glory and Majesty
 for our Redemption, and undergoing such bitter
 cruel Things, for no Fault of his own, should
 be signally and notoriously recompens'd with
 exceeding Glory. To which End the *Psalmist* *
 foretold, *Lift up your Heads, O ye Gates, and be*
ye lift up ye, everlasting Doors, that the King of
Glory may come in, and be inaugurated into his
 everlasting Kingdom, and be glorified with that
 Glory, which he had with the Father before the
 World was. That the Ignominy of his Cross
 might be done away; and that he, the Heir,
 who had not a Place to lay his Head, whilst on
 Earth, might have the Disposal of all Places in
 Heaven and Earth. This again convinces the
 World of Righteousness, *i. e.* the Righteousness
 of the Father in rewarding the Humiliation of the
 Son with such a glorious Exaltation; which made
 it appear, that he forgot not, in due time, to
 vindicate his Son's personal Innocence, so much
 oppress'd with the Contradiction and Contumely
 of Sinners, and crown his Calamity with the
 greater Glory. *Ought not Christ, said he to his*
Disciples, to suffer these Things, according to
 many Prophecies; and so enter into his Glory? †

AND great Reason have we to double our Re-
 joycing in the Lord; for these Triumphs of hu-

* *Psal. xxiv. 8. &c.* † *Luke xxiv. 25.*

man

man Nature over its grand Adversary, who had CHAP.
 subjected it to Death, in its Life and Exaltation XII.
 far above all the dignified Angelick Host, to
 the Right Hand of God. And that we have
 actually there, by means thereof, the most pre-
 vailing *Advocate*, the most tender and affection-
 ate *Intercessor*, and most merciful KING and
 JUDGE. Who, by partaking equally of the
 Divine, and Human Nature, is, in the nature
 of things, the most exact, unexceptionable
 Mediator between, that can be devised by, God
 or Man: Being equally interested in, and rela-
 ted and affected to both, the Balance of Favour, Ju-
 stice, and Duty, is held in the most equal Hand
 And therefore He is the truest MEDIUM,
 and the properest CENTER of Commu-
 nication; to derive from God unto Man, all
 Mercies, Gifts, Blessings, spiritual and tempo-
 ral, all Promises and Performances of Covenant;
 and to convey, and recommend from Man to
 God, all Addresses of Prayer and Thanksgiving,
 all engaged Duty and Service of Repentance and
 Amendment, all Sorrows and Sufferings for the
 Sake of a good Conscience, and to offer up all
 the Sacrifices to Heaven that Men are now al-
 low'd to offer upon Earth.

ALL these Intercourses are kept up, and carried
 on in the powerful *Name of Christ*; so dear to
 God, and for that reason should be as dear to,
 and respected by Man. Therefore are we re-
 quired, *Whatsoever we do in Word or Deed, to do*
all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving Thanks to
God the Father by Him *. *Verily, verily, I say*
unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my

* *Col. iii. 17.*

Name, he will give it you. Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my Name, ask and ye shall receive, that your Joy may be full. TO DO ALL in the Name of the Lord, is, 1. "To have respect in all Things to his Will, as knowing we are obliged to live to him, to the Honour of his Name and Doctrine". 2. To be desirous that our Actions may be well pleasing to Him". 3. To expect Acceptance of our Actions, Prayers, and Praises through Him". 4. A Recompence of them from Him hereafter". In the Name, has several Acceptations in Scripture, 1. In the Authority of, or Commission from. I am come in my Father's Name". I command thee in the Name of the Lord Jesus to come out of". So, agreeably to this, Charge in the King's Name. 2. For the Sake; He that receiveth a Prophet in the Name of¹⁰. 3. Instead of; Comforter shall come, whom God will send in my Name". 4. Power; I have kept them in thy Name". 5. In Profession and Acknowledgment of, Belief in; Thus the Form of Baptism; not by Authority or Commission from. 6. In Aid and Assistance; thus David, I come to thee in the Name of¹².

IN these Senses chiefly we come to God, IN THE NAME of the Mediator, Christ, in Dependence upon Him for free Access even unto⁴, Acceptance with God; according to those Commands of praying, and giving Thanks'.

¹ John xvi. 23, 24. ² 2 Cor. v. 14. ³ 2 Cor. v. 8, 9.
⁴ John xiv. 13, 14, 15, 16. Heb. xiii. 15. ⁵ Eph. vi. 8.
 Col. iii. 24. ⁶ Matth. vii. 22. ⁷ John v. 43.
⁸ Acts xvi. 18. ⁹ 1 Cor. v. 4. ¹⁰ 2 Thess. iii. 6. James v. 10.
¹¹ Matth. x. 41. ¹² John xiv. 26. ¹³ Ib. xvii. 12.
¹⁴ 1 Sam. xvii. 45. ¹⁵ Eph. ii. 16. Heb. x. 19, 22.
¹⁶ 1 Pet. iii. 18. ¹⁷ Acts iv. 12. 1 Cor. iii. 2. Eph. v. 20.
 Phil. iii. 9. Col. iii. 17. 1 Pet. i. 21. ii. 5. Rev. viii. 3.

THE Mediator asserts the Right of his Name, and assures his Followers of the Power, of it from his own Power of granting, and at the same time directs them what was his, and what should be their Intention in applying to his Name, or expecting a favourable Return: *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son*, John xiv. 13.

THIS Intercourse and Dispensation of God in Christ, is admirably calculated to give us true Notions both of God, and Ourselves; whereon the Strefs of true Religion so very much depends. 1. Of the infinite Holiness and Sanctity of God. Seeing he will immediately, and of Himself, maintain no Communication or Dealing with such a sinful Creature as Man, who has by wilful Transgression, corrupted and polluted himself egregiously in his Sight; and, without a Mediator to sanctify and cleanse him from Iniquity, would never admit him into his Presence, or, without his Intervention, have any Converse with him.

THIS moreover gives us most convincing, right Notions, that He is no arbitrary, fickle, capricious Being; in Confutation of the Deists groundless Imputations to his Methods of ruling and governing us by a Mediator. For what can possibly represent him farther distant from Arbitrariness, Fickleness, or Caprice, than his actual referring, and fixing himself to a MEDIATOR, a third Person between himself and us; notwithstanding he is so infinitely superior to us in Dignity, and is the offended and disobliged Party? And in doing so, he may well expostulate, *Are*
 D d 2 no:

not my Ways equal? The mighty God maketh the Overture, and advances not only the first Step, but the greatest Part of the Way, towards a Reconciliation with his diminutive Creature Man; that is done at infinite Expence of Mercy, and Display of Goodness and Placability of Anger on his Part, as before shewn; where does the Stop, Difficulty, Dilatoriness remain, for a perfect Peace and Friendship, but wholly and solely on Man's Part, who purely demurs and dallies in his Danger? The least in Consideration is the last in accepting to be reconciled to God; *are not your Ways unequal?*

ARE not thy Ways very unequal, Son of Man born of a Woman! great in nothing, so much as Stubbornness and Pride against thy Maker, arisen in thy Heart most preposterously from thy Fall and Meanness! Are they not unequal without Measure, and perverse beyond Bounds? Are not thy Ways *arbitrary*, guided by *mere Will* and *Fancy*? Whilst thou wickedly thoughtest me to be such a one as thyself, and takest Measure of me and my Ways, by thyself and thy Ways; and pique at me, before thy Neighbours, for what is only to be found in thyself! Thy Reasonings, therefore, and thy Ways only are arbitrary and wilful, and thy Conclusions against me, are iniquitous and wrong before me, and Man!

2. THIS Dispensation of an INTERCESSOR gives us a true Knowledge and Notion of *ourselves*; as it furnishes us with a meet Opinion, and proper Thoughts of our own very great Unworthiness, and manifold Defections from the right Way, our own Conscience bearing Witness; which throws us at such a Distance, and renders

us

us unapproachable, and our best Conduct disagreeable and exceptionable every Way, but thro' that only Way, the one Mediator *Jesus Christ*.

THE Heathen Sentiments of their own Meanness and Unworthiness, and of God's Greatness and Purity, which occasion'd their Application to and Dependence upon Mediators, were no Fault in them, but a right Foundation of thinking founded in Nature. But their Fault was; they built upon that right Foundation all Sorts of wrong, incompetent, worthless Mediators; they every where worshipp'd for such, as *by Nature* were no Gods; and the Mediator their foolish Heart pitch'd upon intercepted and engrossed the Worship in some sensible Image, which they stupidly glorify'd as God; and they retained not the invisible God in their Knowledge, nor in any religious Respect, at the same Time they knew him to be God incorruptible, and invisible, by his visible corruptible Works; and so were guilty of Idolatry. Our Author, *pag. 74.* contrary to the common Dictates of the Law of Nature affirming, "That *Respect* which they shewed to the supreme Being, and the Thoughts of their *own Unworthiness*, were unworthy Notions in the Heathens." Can any thing be more the Sentiment of Reason, or the conscious Sense of our guilty Nature, than such an high Opinion of God, and such a low one of our own ill Deservings?

BUT the *Papists*, though they pretend to go upon the same Ground, are more inexcusable, in bringing back Idolatry into the Religion of Christ, who came purposely into the World to extinguish it: Because they have the Knowledge of the true and only Mediator, and of many Commands to

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CHAP. the contrary. Yet in Contempt of God and the
XII. Mediator, and their reveal'd Will, they have
chosen to themselves Variety of superfluous Inter-
cessors, *Saints* and *Angels*: And set up an idolatrous, prohibited Worship and Dependance upon them, under a false Shew of Humility; which is not Humility, but an impious disobedient Perverseness and Corruption of Humility in not applying where they are purposely commanded, and only permitted to apply.

SINCE Christ is able of himself to save all to the uttermost who apply to his Mediation, don't they directly diminish the Efficacy, and deny the Sufficiency, and the Divine Appointment of his only Intercession; by their vain ridiculous Application to so many others? Can they be sure, that any Saint or Angel knows their Want, or are capable of hearing their Prayers; as all Christians are sure and certain, that our Lord both knows, and hears them every where? Will they presume to ask Favours of God in a different Way than he has directed to seek them? Is he not Master of his own Favours, and of the Method and Manner how he will confer them? Is there Mention of any Mediator of *Intercession* for us to apply to in Scripture, but one; and he is *Christ*: But they who can quit Scripture, Reason, and their Senses so far as to maintain *Transubstantiation*, may maintain any other Absurdity they please; whether Truth and Falshood are not the same Thing; or rather, whether Interest is not all in all to the degenerate Priesthood, in *changing* the great *Law* of Mediation and Intercession. What can, I say, more reprove the petulant Sufficiency of any Man's reasoning, or Dependance on his own Conduct for Salvation, in despite of Revelation; or more

more convict him of the Want of Humility, and lowly Opinion of himself, the true Ground-work of the Knowledge of Salvation that comes from God, than this Method that God has taken with Man? For this convinces him, if any thing can, of the Worthlessness and Unacceptableness of all that is in his poor Repentance and Amendment, when and where they are refractory to, and contemptuous of the Thoughts of our *Mediator*. Since our Repentance avails as nothing before God, unless it is favour'd, and recommended before him, by the great Inviter to it at the Right Hand of God, who gains it Acceptance. *If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous*; and therefore, if any repent, knowing that Advocate, and depending on him for Remission of Sins, it is he must introduce his Repentance to the Father. And since Repentance without Amendment is Mockery before God and the Mediator, it makes that as necessary, where there is Space of Time for it, as Repentance; yet even that is as unavailing, by Reason of its great Imperfectness, from those who have the Knowledge, and free Use of *Christ*, unless the perfect Righteousness of the Author and Finisher of our Faith cures it, recommends it, and speaks in its Favour.

FOR alas! of ourselves when we have done all that we are able, we are but unprofitable Servants; without the least Shadow of Merit to sue for any thing at the Throne of Grace. Seeing then that we depend upon the Son for all that we have, or hope for, as he is the appointed Dispenser over the House of God, having the Disposal of all Gifts and Graces, and every Blessing that descends from Heaven upon the Sons of

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Men, must come through his Hands, and are owing to his Mediation, we must be mindful and assiduous of doing those Things that are well pleasing to him, as we desire his Favour, or value his Intercession. And to all such he is sure to make good, and obtain from the Father all Promises, Privileges, Grants, inheritable Joys and Rewards: For *he is able to give, and able to save to the uttermost all those that come to him.*

WORTHY Notions of our MEDIATOR are ever necessary, both to regulate our Addresses, and encourage them to the Throne of Grace. I. The Consideration of him, what he really is; as much interested in, and concerned for the Honour and Authority of God, as for the Interest and Benefit of Man; mightily conduces to regulate the Matter of our Prayers and Applications to God. In the Presence and Devotion of such Thoughts, what Votary would presume to offer up Petitions for the Pardon of his Sins, *for the Sake of Jesus Christ his Mediator and Advocate*, whilst he continues unchang'd and impenitent in Mind and Practice, with Regard to that Sin or Sins; or refuses Forgiveness to others for their Trespases against him? He may be very sure such a Petition can never be regarded, or preferr'd by him, who is the *impartial* Mediator of the Covenant between God and Man; when it is so contrariant, and abhorrent to the Terms of it; which promises and ensures Forgiveness to none, but the penitent Forsaker of Sin. And he is as much engaged to be true and faithful to God, in seeing to the Performance of the Terms; as to gain us Favour and Acceptance upon our sincere Performance of them. The Foundation of God, and that Covenant, standeth

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standeth sure, *he that nameth the Name of Christ*, or invokes him for MEDIATOR, *must depart from Iniquity*; or else he may depart from the Thoughts of his being concern'd as Mediator for him: And then his Case is desperate beyond Redemption. The very Prayer of such wicked ones, turns into Abomination, both to God, and the Mediator.

So in every other Petition, or Thanksgiving, as ever we expect him to introduce or second it, we must have a true and due Regard to the Honour of God, and his general Laws, as also his particular Precepts and Directions incumbent upon our Station; as well as to the recommending ourselves, and our Affairs to his Favour; all our publick Prayers and Devotions must be qualify'd with a right Intention, directing them to the single Service of God, not to the Eyes of Men; praying or hoping otherwise in his Intercession, we do but affront him, as if he did not know our Hearts. In that Case, we consider the Mediator not whole and entire as he is, but by *Halves*. And therefore tho' we put our Case into his Hands, he will have no regard to it, unless we submit to him as an *impartial* Mediator: *For just and true are thy ways, O King of Saints!* Rev. xv. 3. Whilst we would gladly make Use of his Interest in the Father to be serviceable to ourselves, we are guilty of the Partiality, and the base Imagination of expecting, he would betray the Respect and Obedience due to his Father's Authority over us; whose Will is one with his, and whose Commands are the same, with regard to our Compliance; *who is now in Heaven, become the Author of eternal Salvation to all that obey him.* And there he has the Denomination

CHAP. XII. mination of Impartiality, being called faithful and true, Rev. xix. 2. which he fulfils both towards God, and Man. Being thus rightly guarded from any Presumption;

2. THIS Dispensation is most graciously and divinely conceded unto Men to encourage our Addresses to Heaven with every Alacrity and Cheerfulness; and with full Assurance of Success, our Hearts can wish. Our Imagination can readily supply, and assist us, as it were, with an actual seeing a glorious Person, a mighty Counsellor in our Human Nature, assisting, abetting, and pleading at the Right Hand of God for human Weakness and Frailty, confessing its Wilfulness and Folly, and vowing its best Resolutions, and performing its sincerest Endeavours after better Obedience. *Having therefore boldness to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus, by a new and living Way, which he has consecrated for us through the Veil, i. e. his Flesh; let us draw near with a true Heart, in full Assurance of Faith, having our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience*. And again, we have Freedom and Access with Confidence to the Father, by Faith in him †. And St. Peter makes it the End of his suffering for our Sins, that he might bring us unto God ‡. And we are commanded to ask in his Name, that we should receive, and that our Joy may be full ||. And herein is Joy, if any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins †. And see how the Apostle ascends in his Argument; Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifies, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died,*

* Heb. x. 19, &c. † Eph. ii. 16. ‡ 1 Pet. iii. 18.
|| John xvi. 14. † John ii. 1.

yea

yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the Right Hand of God, who also maketh INTER- CHAP. XII.
CESSION for us*.

WHAT can intimidate poor Sinners now, or withhold them from their Prayers, though they tremble never so much in their Guilt; what have they to fear from the Number or Burthen of their Sins, or the Corruption of their Nature, or the Imperfection of their Services, or the Fear of Death, or the Day of Judgment? Is not interceding and mediating less than suffering and dying for them; how then can they find in their Heart to disbelieve or doubt that he, who did the one, can possibly forsake them in the other? Had they none but themselves to support and appear for them, they might be justly overwhelm'd with Despair. But having the Son of God, who came into the World to call Sinners to Repentance, and make their Peace by what he suffer'd, ready to stand by them, and bid them be of good Cheer, *their Sins shall be forgiven them*; what unspeakable Joy should flow into their Minds, and animate their Prayers, and all their Endeavours after newness of Life? The understanding that *Peace of God*, which passeth and excelleth all other Understanding, to which they are called, and in which they are bid to stand, should rule in their Heart†, over all the other Joys and Satisfaction, and Understandings of it. The external Peace of a Kingdom is a Cessation from War, and a good Understanding in Trade with its Neighbours; as its internal consists in Concord: the Peace of the Body is Health: the Peace of the concupiscible and irascible Affections is their Go-

* Rom. viii. 33, 34.

† Col. iii. 15.

vernment.

CHAP. vernment. But the Peace of a rational account-
 able Creature to God is the Remission of Sins, &c.
 more valuable than all the rest, and of an infinitely
 greater Consequence: *My Peace I give you, my Peace I leave with you*, is better than all other
 Thanksgiving Days; as the Want of it in a dis-
 quieted Conscience, sowres the Enjoyment of all
 the rest, and makes the Affluence and Pomp of
 the World tasteless and insipid, by times; conse-
 quently the possession of that Sovereign Good,
 the Sense of God's Favour, is to be so pursued
 above all Things.

BUT since we know that his Merits are so
 vast, and his Interest in Heaven so great, as to
 obtain whatever he asks in, Confidence of the
 same, we should be exhorted to *come boldly to the
 Throne of Grace, that we may find Grace to help
 in Time of Need*. Had we no Friend in the Court
 of Heaven, then, indeed our prodigious Guilt
 might well astonish, and congeal us out of any
 Hopes of Acceptance with him, whom we have
 so much offended. But seeing we have so power-
 ful a Friend, and so loving of us, and ready to
 introduce us, and our Services, and interest all
 his infinite Stock of Merit for Favour to the re-
 turning Penitent, we ought to lay aside every
 slavish Fear and cold desponding Thought; and
 approach the infinitely tender God and Father,
 with the Warmth of Freedom join'd with the
 Reverence of Sons adopted by him in Christ. For
 with what transcending Joy does St. Paul acquaint
 us, *that after we had been dead in Sins, God hath
 quicken'd us together with Christ, and raised us to-
 gether with him, and made us to sit in heavenly Places
 in Christ Jesus**; i. e. we are put into the happy

* Eph. ii. 5, 6.

Capacity

Capacity of this by our Repentance and Obe-
 dience; the Blood of Christ having open'd the
 Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers, and given
 us an abundant Entrance into the everlasting
 Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour.

HEREIN our Hope should be sure and steadfast
 as the Anchor of our Soul, which entereth into that
 within the Veil. Whither the Forerunner is for us
 enter'd, even Jesus, Heb. vi. 19, 20. And that
 Entrance gives full Assurance, πληρηφορία, to our
 Hope, and Faith to the End, v. 11. that where
 he is, we may be also. Tertullian speaks in a fine
 triumphant Strain, *Hic sequester dei & hominum
 appellatus, ex utriusq; partis deposito commisso sibi
 carnis quoq; depositum servat in semetipso, Arrabo-
 nem summæ totius. Quemadmodum nobis Arrabo-
 nem spiritus reliquit, ita & a nobis Arrabonem car-
 nis accepit, & vexit in cælum, pignus totius summæ,
 illuc quandoq; redigendæ. Secura estote caro & san-
 guis, usurpastis & cælum & regnum dei in Christo:
 aut si negent vos in Christo, negent & in cælo Chri-
 stum, quis vobis cælum negaverunt.* Lib. de. Resur.
 Carnis.

THE High Priest of our Profession, who
 ever liveth to make Intercession for us, must of-
 fer up all the Sacrifices, on Man's Behalf, that
 are now allowed upon Earth. 1. With Respect
 to God; by him therefore let us offer up the Sacri-
 fice of Praise to God continually, that is, the Fruit
 of our Lips, giving Thanks unto his Name*. The
 Sacrifice of Thanksgiving is a Complex of our
 Lips, and of our Lives. There is also the Sa-
 crifice of a broken and contrite Heart and a Spirit

* Heb. xiii. 15.

troubled

*troubled for Sin ; and from those who have made a Covenant with God with the Sacrifice of his Son, there is added to thanksgiving, the paying the Vows of that Covenant made and meliorated in Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, as the most acceptable Offering for the Mediator to present. Ps. l. li .2. With respect to our Neighbour ; the doing Good and communicating to his Needs, stiled well-pleasing Sacrifices *. He that giveth alms Sacrificeth praise, Ecclus. xxxv. 2. Praise, that he hath to give, and is not in the same wanting Condition. 3. With respect to ourselves ; our Bodies are to be presented a living Sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable Service†.*

IT is a fit Oblation both to God and Reason, that the Body should be govern'd by the Mind, with all its Affections and Lusts ; which are therefore required to be crucify'd and subdu'd ; seeing the misruling of them, was that, which first brought Sin into the World, and afterwards a Saviour to die for it. Therefore it would be the most unreasonable Thing in the World, not to be very vigilant upon that first Inlet to Sin. Its Temperance and Purity will always be a reasonable, and therefore a Christian Service. If the Soul can so far prevail as a King in that Government ; or as a Priest unto God to offer the Body a living Sacrifice, holy, &c. with its Affections and Lusts, corresponding to Christ in his Mercies, offering himself a Sacrifice ; all the Opposition, and all the Opportunities of the Devil are conquer'd, the Victory over the World gain'd, which is the Design of the reasonable Service of Christianity. And if our Bodies are redeemed from

* Heb v. 16.

† Rom. xii. 1.

the Grave, as well as the other Moiety of us our Souls from Destruction ; it is but a reasonable grateful Return, that we should study to glorify God in our Bodies, as well as in our Souls. All these are called *spiritual Sacrifices* by St. Peter, *acceptable unto God* *.

IF we consider this heavenly Advocate, as Bone of our Bone, and Flesh of our Flesh, having the Affection of a Brother, strengthen'd with an Almighty Power and immense Mercy, and that his Heart is sensibly touch'd with the Sorrows and Miseries of all those who recommend their Supplications to him for Redress ; *For we have not an High Priest who can't be touch'd with the feeling of our Infirmities, but was in all Things tempted as we are, yet without Sin* † : What a Fund of Consolation is this, to all who suffer for a good Conscience ? When they may look up to him who is the Patron of Conscience, and was through *Suffering* consecrated the Author and Finisher of our Faith ; and therefore can never fail to remember, or to be insensible to intercede for them, out of the fresh Memory and never failing Experience of former Grievs and Sorrows. Their Case is felt, and therefore heard, and favour'd of course. And what Temptation can befall any of his Followers, the Pressure of which he did not himself sustain, as their Captain in the Combat, leading the way to Conquest ? And therefore certain either of his equivalent Assistance, or of his shaping a way to escape, that they shall not be tempted above what they are able. We therefore pray with Success, O Son

* 1 Pet. ii. 5.

† Heb. iv. 15.

CHAP. of David have Mercy on us! Reward us not after
XII. (according to) our Iniquities!

THE Apostle supports his Argument, why Prayers, Supplications, Intercessions, and giving of Thanks, should be made for all Men, from the Consideration of the *Man* Christ Jesus being the *one* Mediator between God and Man*; and previously to that, he shews it to be our Duty to pray for all Men, because *God would have all Men to be saved*; and the Proof of that is, *For there is one God*, who made all Men of one Blood, the *Creator*, and *Saviour* of all Men; and therefore as much Reason to save the *Gentiles*, as the *Jews*, being God of one as well as the other. Then follows, *and one Mediator* [or Peace-Maker] *betwixt God and Man*, the *Man Christ Jesus*. Had Christ Jesus been denominated Mediator there, from his superior Nature, Son of God, it would only have repeated the same Thing; but calling him *Man* is a further Argument that God is not only the Maker of all Men, but his Son also took on him the Nature that is common to all Men; which is a much more endear'd Reason of his Willingness to save *all* of that Nature; all Men partaking of the same Flesh and Blood he took upon Him, are therefore *related* to this one Mediator, and therefore intended by this one God to be saved through this one Mediator. Besides, the *Human* Nature of *Christ* (though that Word implies both his Natures) is only mentioned, because that Propitiation, which render'd him that successful Mediator, essentially depended upon his *Death*: His Divine Nature could not die; though, as High Priest, he offer'd and pre-

* 1 Tim. ii. 1 to 6.

sented

sented *his own Blood* of that suffering dying Nature, or himself crucified, *without Spot to God*, *through the eternal Spirit*†, or in the Dignity and deservings of that Spirit, by which he was the Son of God.

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THE Words of *Philo* as cited by Dr. *Whitby* on 1 Tim. ii. 5. are so remarkable, that I transcribe them. "The Father of all Things hath granted to his most ancient Word, an excellent Gift, viz. That standing in the Confiness of both, he should put a Difference betwixt the Maker, and the Thing made, as being an Intercessor for mortal Man to the immortal God, and an Ambassador from the King to his Subjects; in which Gift he rejoiceth, saying, And I stood betwixt God and you, being neither unbegotten as God, nor made as we are, but a middle of the Extreame, and a Pledge to both; to the Creator, engaging that all Mankind shall not corrupt itself, and apostatize, chusing Disorder before Order; to the Creature, that he may have good Hope that the merciful God will not wholly overlook his own Work; for I denounce peaceable Things to the Creature, from the God of Peace." And speaking of their *High Priest*, who was a Type of Christ, he saith, "The Law will have him raised above human Nature, and coming near to the Divine; and if I may say the Truth, a middle betwixt both, that Men may atone God by a Mediator, and God may reach forth and distribute his Favours to Men, by a certain Minister." And again. "It was neces-

† Heb. ix. 14.

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"sary

CHAP. "fary that he, who performs the Office of a
 XII. "Priest to the Father of the World, should
 ~~~~~ "have for his Advocate his Son, most perfect in  
 "Virtue, to obtain the Pardon of Sins, and the  
 "Participation of the greatest Blessings."

I PROCEED, in a few Words, to mention  
 the Mediator as *King* and *Judge*.




CHAP.



CHAP. XIII.

*Of the MEDIATOR as KING.*

 UR Lord at his ascension was in-CHAP.  
 vested with a Kingdom and Rule XIII.  
 over all the creation of Spirits and ~~~~~  
 Men. Angels, Principalities, and  
 Powers, being made subject unto  
 him, that all knees should bow and do homage  
 to the King of Glory, whom God delighted to  
 honour. This is meant of his *mediatorial* King-  
 dom, assumed upon the Fall of Man, to last till  
 the Restitution of all Things; which will be  
 possess'd by him as KING, LORD, MEDIA-  
 TOR, INTERCESSOR, the *Head* of all the  
 Means for bringing Men to God, until all  
 Things shall actually be subdued unto him, and  
 the Kingdoms of the Earth become the King-  
 dom of his Son; and at the Consummation of  
 this Scene of Man, when the last Enemy, Death,  
 shall be put under his Feet by a general Resur-  
 rection, and every one has receiv'd from *his*  
 Judgment, according to his Deeds done in the  
 Body, the End of the Mediation ceasing, the  
 Kingdom will cease with it, and be resign'd up to  
 the Father; and then all Power and Dominion  
 will be from thenceforth, and for ever, solely,  
 and immediately exercised by the Deity, *That*  
*God may be all in all*, as it was before the Fall of  
 Man.

FOR this Kingdom, being founded in the New Covenant, commenc'd in its Title and Jurisdiction, immediately after the Fall of our first Parents; though it was not perfected till after the Resurrection and Ascension of the Mediator: Till which time, *John* his Forerunner, *He himself*, and his *seventy Disciples*, preach'd Repentance in the Style of the Kingdom of Heaven being then *at Hand*. And this his Mediatorial Governance was enlarged at his ascension to Heaven by the addition of all Angels, Thrones, and Dominions, being subjected to him: And now all good and bad Spirits act in Subordination to him, as he appoints and directs the one, and permits the other, in the affair of Man's Salvation.

IN virtue of this KINGLY Authority he gave Laws to *Israel*, and ruled divinely over them; and sometimes went visibly in and out before them, to lead and conduct them in their Marches and Difficulties; and was angry with them, when they required a more visible King of their Brethren, wholly like themselves. At last, the *Jews* to fill up the Measure of their manifold Disobediences to him, fulfill'd the Exposition of *Pilate* (*Will ye crucify your King?*) with their wicked Hands. As a Heavenly King of Righteousness, over his Church and People, he has for heavenly Ends of Righteousness, and Controul of Wickedness, deputed the supreme Powers of civil Government, (who submit to him, and to his Scepter of Righteousness) and under them, Bishops, Pastors, and other spiritual Subordinations, for the Defence, and for the Edification thereof. And all these hold of their *supreme Head Christ*, who is styled the Head of the

the Church; and are tied to his Laws in all Things relating to Souls and their Salvation, which is the Object of Christ's Care and Government.

ALL Professors of his Name, wheresoever dispersed over the Earth, are cemented together as Fellow-Subjects of his Kingdom, of Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, by receiving his Doctrines, embracing his Laws and Directions; by living up to them, they keep Communication with the Head, and by shewing Submission, receive Favour and Protection from him. More especially those Laws of *Baptism*, the *Lord's Supper*, and *worshipping God through Christ*; which are fundamental to, and constitutive of his *Mediatorial Kingdom*. Let all then who are thus subject in Spirit, and loyal in Soul unto Christ, glory and comfort themselves with his Power: Since he is an Omnipotent King, can do all Things, and nothing can withstand his Will; and as he is a most tender, loving, and no less vigilant Ruler, and Defender of the Faith, to whom all Secrets are open and known; we may rest confident, That not the Gates of Hell, not that great Enemy of ours, Death; not the Malice of Devils; not the Conspiracies of the Powers of Darkness; nor all the persecuting Combinations upon Earth, can finally prevail to destroy his Church; though he may suffer it, for a time, to be afflicted; that in their Affliction his Servants may know him the better, and call upon him the more.

FURTHER, as a gracious King, he is always ready to send powerful Aid and Assistance to every particular Subject, in their several Engage-

CHAP. XIII. ments with his, and their Enemies ; and in his Might and Strength fighting with him, and for him, and for themselves, they will be more than common Conquerors : *For to him that overcometh, will be grant to sit on his Throne, even as he himself overcame, and sat down upon his Father's Throne\**. He rewards, as a King, those who faithfully serve and obey him. As a King punishes, and cuts asunder the Rebellious and Unbelievers, who would not have him rule over them : And who can escape his Power, or abide his Wrath ?

\* Rev. iii. 21.



CHAP.



# CHAP. XIV.

## Of the MEDIATOR as JUDGE.

THE Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed ALL JUDGMENT to the Son ; That all Men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father †. And it imports them so to do. For if the eternal Fate, and final Issue of all, who have the Knowledge of Christ, depends upon the Sentence of his Judgment, and our everlasting Destruction or Salvation will be then at his Disposal, it surely concerns every Christian to secure him, from whom they take their Name, for their Patron and Preserver at that Day of Reparation to the Righteous, and Vengeance to the Wicked, by that Respect and Duty which will engage him to be so ; as much as it concerns us to secure the Favour of the Father, who gave us our Being, by that Honour and Obedience which are due to him.

Now if we are obliged to obey the Son in Thought, Word, and Deed, as much as the Father ; the Will and Commandments of the Son, being the Will and Commandments of the Father, we of course must honour him, as well

† John v. 22, 23.

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CHAP. XIV. as we honour the Father; *Obedience*, in those Respects, being the best Testimony of an Inferior's honouring a Superior, who has Authority over him. But as God has made us *accountable* Creatures, and his Son in particular to *take the account* of all our Actions, Words, and Thoughts, and we know that to be the Appointment of the Father; the Command of honouring one, as well as the other, executes itself, and Obedience to it unavoidably follows; seeing we depend upon one for our last Stake, as much as the other; especially since dishonouring and disobeying the Son, is the same thing as dishonouring and disobeying the Father, who sent him into the World, (as it follows in the same *verse*, sent him as his own Son) to become also the Son of Man.

THIS is another Instance of the Care and Wisdom of the Father, in making his Appointments, and laying his Commands in the Nature of Things, as being previously prepared, and capable of executing them. For if the Son was not Omniscient and Omnipresent by *Nature*, as he is the *Son of God*, how could he be capable of *judging* the World, supposing him to have Power given him for first raising all Men from the dead, whom he is to sit in Judgment upon? How could he otherwise *bring every secret Thought and Work into Judgment*, or *bring to light the hidden Things of Darkness*, or *manifest the Secrets of the Heart*, and so *judge every Man according to his Works*? perhaps, every secret Sin of Penitents, though pardon'd and cancell'd, will be brought to Light, that the Mercy of pardoning may be as manifest before all the World, as the Knowledge in observing them. This will gall the Impenitent and the Hypocrite with most desperate

Pangs of Sorrow, that their Behaviour and CHAP. XIV. Devotion was not such before him, who seeth in secret, as to have their Sins revers'd; but must then be openly produced, *only* to their Condemnation. Tho' they then beseech him to deliver them by his Agony and bloody Sweat, by his Cross and Passion, by his precious Death and Burial, and by his glorious Resurrection and Ascension; He will not then be entreated; he is no longer their Mediator, but their JUDGE. Not every one that saith unto him, *Lord, Lord*, but he that doth the Will of his Father which is in Heaven, shall be admitted thither.

THEN will secret Piety and Charity appear with great Joy, to be rewarded publickly, and plentifully, according to the Plenty they have sown. Then will all seeming Irregularities in Divine Providence be set to Rights, to the Satisfaction of all. The Oppressor will receive for the Wrongs he hath done, and, together with the Proud, be humbled down to Hell; whilst the humble, and the innocently oppress'd shall be exalted to Heaven. Then will Rewards be proportion'd according to Degrees in Virtue, and sincere improvements of Talents and Opportunities, without any Envy, or the least grudging at those, who came in at the eleventh Hour: Then will righteous, final Punishments be allotted according to evil Deeds, with a particular Discrimination of Woe and Suffering to deliberate *Unbelievers*, Rejecters of Christ and his Mediation, and to the Scoffers at his Salvation; for at that Day, it will be more *tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha*, than for them; *their Intemperance is at an End*, *their Infidelity is cut off*, *Righteousness is grown*, and *truth is sprung up*. Then shall no Man be



CHAP. be able to save him that is destroyed, nor to  
XIV. oppress him that hath got the Victory, 2 Esd. vii.  
44.

THOSE are the idle, profligate Words in particular, (according to the subject Matter of the Place) the denying or deriding the great Doctrine of the Gospel, *Remission of Sins through the Mediator*, attested by the Father, and especially by the Miracles of the *Holy Ghost*, the imputing those attesting Miracles to another Spirit, or which is the same Thing, the impeaching that Doctrine, is the unpardonable Blasphemy against the *Holy Ghost*, and are those idle Words which our Lord says will be brought to Account at the Day of Judgment; and their final Condemnation will be affected by them, *Mat. xii. 31, to 38.* But all the Believers, and publick Professors of Christ, whom they now deride, will then sit in Judgment upon them as Assessors with him, and Witnesses of unreasonable Obstinacy, or cowardly Denial of him. Then will all the World be cited before the Judgment-Seat of Christ; to give an Account, and to receive according to *what they have*, and not according to *what they have not*.

IT is said, the Father *hath given him Authority to execute Judgment, because he is the Son of Man\**, i. e. because he was the true *Messias*, who was to come in the Clouds of Heaven, (according to the *Jews* Expectation, and the Prophecy of *Daniel*†; not at his first, as is their unhappy Mistake, but second Advent to judge the World) to whom all Power and Dominion is given. By becoming Son

\* *John v. 27.*

† *John vii. 13, 14.*

of Man, he suffer'd Death in our Nature, and so CHAP.  
became † the Author of Salvation to all that obey XIV.  
him. Besides, in that Nature only, could he become a visible Judge unto Men, which is so necessary and proper to the Execution of that Authority. And God is said to judge the World in Righteousness by the Man Christ Jesus, whom he hath ordained ||.

AT that Day, all human Nature have the Consolation, of having the Judge on their Side, related to them as a Brother and personally acquainted with the Frailties of Flesh; the Bowels of a Man joined to the infinite Goodness of God: And as many as have a good Conscience will love that Appearance. But when such Mercy and Goodness, and near Relation passes Sentence for Transgressions, all Mouths must be stopped; we cannot then help joining with him even in condemning ourselves; if the present, frequent, condemning ourselves does not prevent it, and produce timely Repentance. What can be so terrible to the mind of Man, as the Solemnity, and Necessity of that Time, when we shall condemn ourselves everlastingly; and do it, as soon as ever we begin to see him, who once came riding on an Ass, coming in the Clouds of Heaven with Miriads of Angels, to take Vengeance on those who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of Christ.

AS to the certain Time and Season when that will be, that is wisely lock'd up from Man, as a useless, impertinent Knowledge to his Condition. For all his Use of Time and Season, who hath

† *Heb. vi. 8, 9.*

|| *Acts xviii. 31.*

CHAP. but a short Time to live, is to be always ready.  
 XIV. The uncertain Time of Death will certainly find us, and just as it finds, remit us over to the Day of Judgment; and then what Good will the knowing that Day do us? The Hour of Death, and the Day of Judgment are so connected together, that he who does not live in Preparation for one, will never be prepared for the other; therefore an Excitement to that Preparation, as to any due Effect, is as well drawn from the uncertain near Approach of one, as of the other: And as to the practical Uses of Godliness, will in all Ages be one and the same Motive.

As our Author takes Occasion to reflect upon the Apostles, and the Spirit by which they spake and wrote to the Churches, from their supposed Mistakes that the then Age, when they wrote, were the *tempora novissima*, the approaching *End of the World*, and the *last Days* of it, for three Pages together \*, and concludes his Reflections, in these Words: "If most of the Apostles, upon what Motives soever, were mistaken in a Matter of this Consequence, how can we be absolutely certain, that any one of them may not be mistaken in any other Matter? If they were not inspired in what they said in their Writings concerning the then coming of Christ; how could they be inspir'd in those Arguments they build on a Foundation far from being so? And if they thought their Times were the last, no Direction they gave, could be intended to reach farther than their own Times."

\* Pag. 233. to 236.

AND

AND he says, "The best Commentators and Interpreters own, the Apostles were grossly mistaken," as to these Matters. But in that he is grossly mistaken; For the latest and best, as Dr. *Whitby* copying from the ancientest of all, is of another Sentiment: To whom I refer the Reader, who will find *Grotius's* dangerous Opinion (the Opinion probably our Author builds upon) confuted, as to this Matter. *Vid. Whitby, Heb. ix. 26. 1 Thes. iv. 15. 1 Cor. x. 11. and particularly Phil. iv. 5. The Lord's being at Hand*, and the near Approach of the Son of Man, at the Time of the Apostles Writings, to the Destruction of *Jerusalem* solves the Meaning of those Phrases, and other Peoples Mistakes about them, as clearly and confessedly, as the Destruction of *Jerusalem* is acknowledged to be an Emblem of the general Judgment. Perhaps the *Lord being at hand* may be solv'd by that sense, *present with, nigh to us* in his Inspection over us, according to that in *2 Esd 11. 34. He is nigh at hand, that shall come in the end of the world: and that satisfieth a Saviour openly, ver. 36.*

It is agreed by all, that the *last Days* so often mentioned, *the Close of the Ages*, when the *Jews* were to be unchurched, and the *new Heavens and new Earth* of a better and larger Church were to commence, or as we translate *συντέλεια τῶν αἰώνων*, *the End of the World*, *Heb. ix. 26.* mean the Days of the prophesied *Messias*, the *Christian Age*, and comprehend all that Duration of Time from his first, to his second coming to Judgment. And the *Fulness of Time* at his first Advent, may probably be meant the full *HALF*, or *MEDIUM* of Time, of the World's Duration; according to that of the Prophet, *O Lord, revive thy Work in the*

CHAP. the MIDST of the Years, in the MIDST of the  
XIV. Years make known, in Wraib remember Mercy \*.

If the *Work* there is admitted to signify the *Redemption* of the World; then, as there were four Thousand Years of the first Days before the first coming of Christ, from that to his *second* coming there will remain to be reckon'd four Thousand Years, of the *last Days*. And this abates the Outcry of our Author †, "Of God's having left "all Mankind for four Thousand Years together, "destitute of sufficient Means to do their Duty : "For if the Middle of the World's Period was the *Fitness* of Time for his Appearance, and the Benefit of his Redemption extended equally backward, as it does forward, there is no Sense in his Exclamation. Seeing the middle Period has been actually pitch'd upon to bring it to pass; that the Patience of those who went *before* might not be worn out by too long Expectation of the Fulfilment of the Promise; and they who came *after* might not be tempted to think themselves the less concern'd in, or give less Credit to a Matter of Fact that happened so very long ago, had it been much sooner. Tho' the Design was 4000 years in ripening into Maturity, if the salutary Benefit of it took place upon the *first* Day it was first *predicted* and *promised*, what reason can these Men now have to reject the offer of such rich Fruit, or malign Divine Providence for that Delay,

\* Hab. iii. 2. 1. Opus Dei per excellentiam vocat statum electi populi sive ecclesie, quam agnoscere vult Deus tanquam singulare opusculum & specimen præcipuum suæ virtutis, sapientiæ, justitiæ, bonitatis. Vel 2. Conservationem populi Dei. Vel 3. Redemptionem Judæorum. Vel 4. Allegorice redemptionem totius generis humani, Opus Magnum Incarnationis. Pool. Synopf. Crit.

† Pag. 339.

when

when they may at this time enjoy so plenteous a CHAP.  
Redemption. XIV.

AND if the great Comet that appear'd 1680, whose periodical Return is 575 Years, will indeed be the Instrument under God for bringing on the great *παλιγγενεσία*, or Renovation by Fire, it is easy to compute, was there any just Augury in such Things, how many Revolutions are wanting to compleat such a suppos'd *Catastrophe* of this Globe, and the Inhabiters thereof: Before the internal Groans of a dying World, and the external Cries, Horrors, Crashings of that *swift Destruction*, dreadful *Conflagration* shall astonish the Ears of all that hear. *By Measure hath he measured the Times, and by Number hath he number'd the Times! and he doth not move nor stir them until the said Measure be fulfill'd, 2 Esd. iv. 37.*

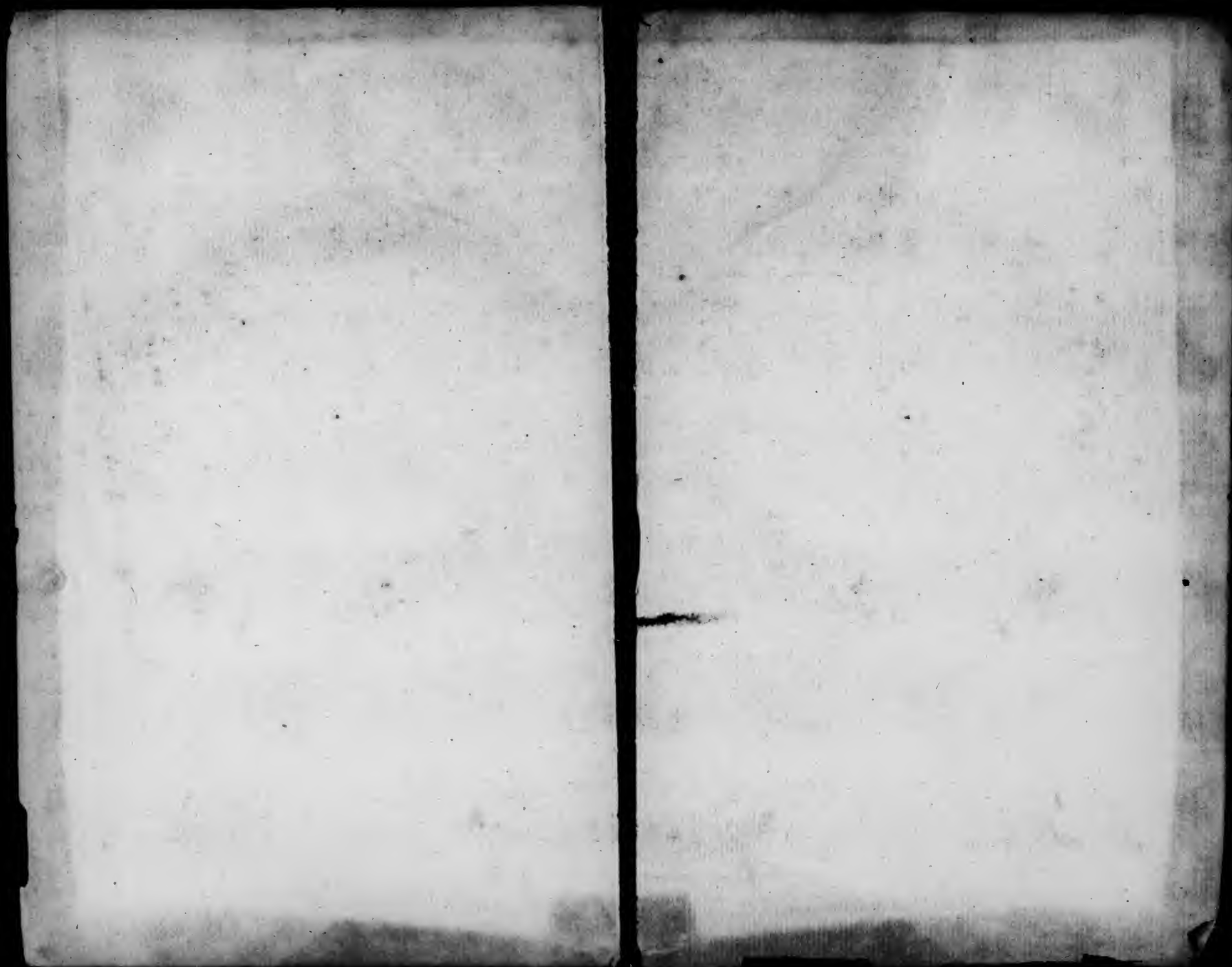
BUT let this pass, as an incidental Conjecture, in a Case, wherein there can be no Certainty in any human Scheme whatsoever.

END of the First VOLUME.









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## CHAP.



## CHAP. XV.

### *Of the INWARD AIDS of the Christian Religion.*



THE Author of *Christianity as* CHAP.  
*old, &c.* has given so imper- XV.  
fect an Account both of Na-  
tural Religion, and of Chri-  
stianity, as in a manner to be  
totally silent as to the *internal*  
*Aids, external Motives, and*  
*the Helps and Instruments* that

appertain to Religion; necessarily arising out of the Nature of Things, as Man is a religious, sociable Creature, and of a weak impotent Nature, strong Passions and unruly Affections, great Hindrances of Religion. The first is a new *Advocate* to the Regent Power of Man's Actions; the second is a *Balance* to the Passions; and the third mightily promotes Religion as he is a *sociable* Creature. I shall endeavour to supply his Defects, and treat of each of them.

FIRST, of INTERNAL AIDS: It does not comport with our Author's vain-glorious Principle, the *All-sufficiency* of human Reason to attain the Favour of God in all Circumstances of Opportunity, as well in Heathen as Christian Regions, to admit of this. For, as they scorn ex-  
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ternal Assistance of a Revelation from God; or, which is the same thing, every part of it, but what is a Republication of the Law of Nature, which they call their internal Revelation; they are above being beholden to this, the Promise and Assurance whereof is only derivable from that Revelation they reject. Besides, this Author \* denies it to be consistent with the Goodness of God, to permit such a subtle evil Spirit as the *Devil* to tempt Mankind; which not only frustrates the Use of such a *Counter Aid* of the good Spirit against him, but seems to deny the Being of the Devil, or God's Governance over him, and us.

YET the Heathen Philosophers were perfectly sensible of their want of this Assistance, which they thought necessary as well for *knowing the Truth*, as for enabling them *to do good*, as might be made appear from variety of Instances †; and in their Sense of the want of it, they likewise panted after a Revelation of the Will of Heaven; insomuch that in reference to such sensible Wants the Language of Scripture imputes that to be a *Desire* in them, which they explicitly knew nothing of. Thus the *Messiah* is called *the Desire of all Nations* ‡, and the Expectation of the *Gentiles* ||; and the *Creature*, general Mankind, to be in *earnest Expectation to be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption,—the Redemption of the Body from the Grave* †: Both which Desire and Expectation, so good and advantageous to the Human Creature, the *modern Deists* unnaturally

\* Page 351, 352. † Which are well collected in *Histoire de la Philosophie Payenne*, Tome Premier 8vo, 1724, p 374 to 389. Vid. *Alnetan Quæst.* Lib. XI. c. 10. ‡ Hag. ii. 7. || Gen. xlix. 10. † Rom. viii. 19, 21, 23.

disclaim.

disclaim. So lost, and so much worse is the CHAP.  
Condition of those who condemn, than of those XV.  
who never had the use of Revelation.

If they would reconcile themselves to the Sentiments of the wisest and most sensible ancient Philosophers in this matter, they might, by an easy Transition, be brought to the Acknowledgment of *Revelation* by the same Spirit; the written Word of which, in the Opinion of some Christians, affords such effectual Assistance, as to supersede the occasion of inward Aid. The first may be called the *still small external Voice* wherein God is present, and more certainly so than in Earthquakes, and Whirlwinds; yet it is most certain, he is moreover *inwardly* present by his Holy Spirit. But as long as they reject both, they evidently make it appear, that they have a Perverseness in Principle, and Degeneracy of Reason beyond common Mortals.

I SHALL here take an occasion to quote some Passages from Dr. *Samuel Clark*. “ In Experience and Practice it hath appeared to be altogether impossible, for Philosophy and bare Reason to reform Mankind effectually without the Assistance of some higher Principle.—So that without some greater Help and Assistance Mankind is plainly left in a very bad State. Indeed in the original uncorrupted State of human Nature, before the Mind of Man was depraved with prejudiced Opinions, corrupt Affections, and vicious Inclinations, Customs and Habits, right Reason may justly be supposed to have been a sufficient Guide, and a Principle powerful enough to preserve Men in the constant Practice of their Duty: But in the present Circumstances and Condition of Mankind, the wisest and most sensible of the

B 2

“ Philosophers

CHAP. XV. " Philosophers themselves have not been backward to complain, that they found the Understanding of Men so dark and cloudy, their Wills so bias'd and inclined to Evil, their Passions so outrageous and rebelling against Reason, that they look'd upon the Rules and Laws of right Reason, as very hardly practicable, and which they had very little Hope of ever being able to persuade the World to submit to: In a Word, they confessed that human Nature was strangely corrupted, and acknowledged this Corruption to be a Disease, whereof they knew not the true Cause, and could not find out a sufficient Remedy: So that the great Duties of Religion were laid down by them as Matters of Speculation and Dispute, rather than as the Rules of Action; and not so much urged upon the Hearts and Lives of Men, as proposed to the Admiration of those, who thought them scarce possible to be effectually practised by the generality of Men. To remedy all these Disorders, and conquer all these Corruptions, there was plainly wanting some extraordinary and supernatural Assistance, which was above bare Reason and Philosophy to procure, and yet without which the Philosophers themselves were sensible there could never be any truly great and good Men: *Nemo unquam vir magnus sine Divino Afflatu fuit* \*." Cicero.

He had before † given a beautiful Description of the Corruption of Nature from Tully as the Ground of this Assistance. *If we had come into the World in such Circumstances, as that we could have clearly and distinctly discerned Nature herself,*

\* *Epid. of Nat. Rel. &c.* p. 238, 239, 240.

† *Pag.* 196, 197.

and

CHAP. XV. *and have been able in the Course of our Lives to follow her true and uncorrupted Directions; this alone might have been sufficient, and there would have been little need of Teaching and Instruction. But now Nature has given us only some small Sparks of right Reason, which we so quickly extinguish with corrupt Opinions, and evil Practices, that the true Light of Nature no where appears: As soon as we are brought into the World, immediately we dwell in the midst of all Wickedness, and are surrounded with a number of most perverse and foolish Opinions; so that we seem to suck in Error even with our Nurses Milk: Afterwards when we return to our Parents and are committed to Tutors; then we are further stocked with such variety of Errors, that Truth becomes perfectly overwhelm'd with Vanity; and the most natural Sentiments of our Minds are entirely stifled with confirm'd Follies: But when after all this we enter into the World, and make the Multitude, conspiring every where in Wickedness, our great Guide and Example; then our very Nature itself is wholly transform'd, as it were, into corrupt Opinions.*

Now \* this Divine Assistance is vouchsafed to Men under the Christian Dispensation in such a manner, as appears to be undeniably agreeable to the natural Expectations of right Reason, and suitable to the best and worthiest Notions, that Men have ever by the Light of Nature been able to frame to themselves concerning the Attributes and Perfections of God. *If ye, says our Saviour, being evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* Luke xi. 13. The

\* *Pag.* 280, 281.

CHAP. " Effects of this Divine Assistance evidenced  
XV. " itself in a very visible and remarkable manner  
" in the primitive Times, by the sudden, won-  
" derful and total Reformation of far greater  
" Numbers of wicked Men, than ever were  
" brought to Repentance by the Teaching and  
" Exhortation of all the Philosophers in the  
" World \*."

I PRODUCE one Authority more, Mr. *Locke*.  
" I am far, says he, from denying, that God  
" can or doth sometimes enlighten Mens Minds  
" in the apprehending of certain Truths; or  
" excite them to good Actions, by the immediate  
" Influence and Assistance of the Holy Spirit."  
And on *Rom. viii. 8*. " 'Tis the Spirit of God  
" alone that enlivens Men, so as to enable them  
" to cast off the Dominion of their Lusts."  
And on *v. 11*. " Here he [the Apostle] shews,  
" that Christians are deliver'd from their carnal  
" sinful Lusts, by the Spirit of God, that is  
" given to them, and dwells in them as a new  
" quickening Principle and Power, by which  
" they are put into a State of Spiritual Life,  
" wherein their Members are made capable of  
" being made Instruments of Righteousness."  
" To these I must add one Advantage more  
" we have by Jesus Christ, and that is the Pro-  
" mise of Assistance. If we do what we can,  
" he will give us his Spirit to help us to do  
" what, and how we should. 'Twill be idle for  
" us, who know not how our own Spirits move  
" and act us, to ask in what manner the Spirit

\* As appears by that of *Orig. adver. Cels. Lib. I. Παρε-  
μὴν τοῖς Ἑλλήσιν εἰς πῆ, &c.* And that of *Lactant. Lib. III. Da  
mibi virum, qui sit iracundus, maledicus, effrenatus; pau-  
cissimis Dei verbis tam placidum, quam ovem reddam. Da  
libidinosum, &c.*

" of

CHAP. " of God shall work upon us. The Wisdom CHAP.  
XV. " that accompanies that Spirit knows better than XV.  
" we how we are made, and how to work upon  
" us. If a wise Man knows how to prevail on  
" his Child, to bring him to what he desires;  
" can we suspect that the Spirit and Wisdom of  
" God should fail in it, though we perceive or  
" comprehend not the Ways of his Operations?  
" Christ has promised who is faithful and just,  
" and we cannot doubt of the Performance \*."

THAT Spirits act upon Spirits there can be  
as little doubt, as that Bodies act upon Bodies:  
And that there are certain ways of silent  
Communication, Insinuation, or Suggestion of  
Thoughts or Ideas, the Spring of Alteration,  
and proper Spheres of giving or receiving Im-  
pression, according to the Rank and Capacity  
of the Spirit giving, or receiving it; as there  
are Laws of Motion with respect to Bodies, and  
their Sphere: And that the supreme Governor  
superintends them both. And, as in his Go-  
vernment of the natural World every thing  
depends upon his immediate Influence, and the  
constant Renewal of that Influence, for the Pre-  
servation and Direction of their Motion, ac-  
cording to their Nature; so, in his Government  
of the moral World, it is consonant to natural  
Faith to believe, that moral Agents depend  
upon the Influence of his regular Concurrence,  
and ordinary Assistance in a way suitable to their  
Nature and Faculties, and the Liberty they are  
invested with. Consequently, that the HOLY  
SPIRIT may impress our Spirits with such  
Thoughts and Cogitations as are the Seeds of  
good Actions; as certainly, as the evil Spirit

\* *Reasonabl. of Christ. p. 289.*

B 4

insinuates



CHAP. XV. insinuates and injects such Motions and Ideas, as are the certain Beginning of Sin and Wickedness, if not timely resisted and suppress'd; and so become an Aider, Advocate, and Comforter to us against the Vigilance of evil Spirits, the Impor- tunity of Temptations, and the Unreadiness of our own moral Powers. It is reasonable to be- lieve, whereas they who chuse evil Courses, and side themselves in Opposition, don't want a su- perior Power, *spiritual Wickedness in high Places*, to animate and carry them on to all Vice and Depravity; that they who follow God, and prefer his ways of Virtue, Truth, and Liberty, most certainly have an *Encourager* and *Promoter* of their Cause, superior to the other, for carry- ing them on in Virtue unto Glory. As the evil Spirit is vigilant and intent upon deceiving the Understanding, corrupting the Will, and tempting the Affections; so the Holy Spirit is more careful and present than the *Dæmon* of *Socrates*, to check and *dissuade* all those who de- sire his Aids and cultivate his Assistance, from what is wrong and unhappy in the Event. And if *Christians* would be faithful to that heavenly Monitor against Evil and Advocate for Good, it wou'd be equivalent to the original Strength and Genius of Man's Understanding, Will, and Affections, which have severally faulter'd, and been weaken'd with Sin.

MOREOVER, the Mediator helps and honours Worm Man, whom he stoop'd to visit and re- deem, with the Ministration of elect *Angels*, Fellow Servants of a superior Order, upon occa- sional Guards and Services. We are sure, tho' we need none to help us to offend God, from Matter of Fact of sad Experience, that there are suddenly and imperceptibly, strangely, and strongly

strongly darted into the Thoughts of Christians, CHAP. XV. whilst they are exercised in Prayer and other holy Things, such foreign improper Things, as are the too frequent Occasion of Wanderings and Coldness, as if designed to intercept prevailing Fervency, and suspend any Impression upon us for Good: Which can be resolv'd into no Cause, but the Efforts and Agency of the evil Spirit. And Experience attests further, that Thoughts which savour of Impurity, or Blasphemy, or other Iniquity, are irresistible as to their first Entrance and Beginning in the Mind, therefore not im- putable to us as Sin, before they have gain'd a Continuance there by our Consent and Appro- bation.

AND we are as certain from Revelation, that the *Devil* is indefatigably vigilant \* in laying *Snares* for our Ruin, and strangely subtle in his *Devices* † and Temptations, which we are charged to be aware of; and to *pray*, as well as watch *that we enter not into them*, for this Reason, because *the Spirit is willing, but the Flesh weak* ‡; we should in Prayer apply to and at- tend upon constant Aid from above, that the willing Spirit may be made stronger to restrain the yielding Flesh. Though we delight in the Law of God *after the inward Man*, † which shews the Law to be *spiritual* in that Sense, *ver. 14.* and also that every Man has *that* Testimony within himself of the original Uprightness of his State and Nature, yet the *Law of the Members*, which wars against the Law of the Mind, would always bring it into Captivity to the Law of Sin, if supervening Assistance did not turn the Scale.

\* 1 Pet. v. 8. 2 Tim. iii. 7. † 2 Cor. ii. 11.  
‡ Mat. xxvi. 41. † Rom. viii. 22, 23, &c.

CHAP. XV. IT would be an unequal Combat for the confefs'd Weakness and Degeneracy of human Nature, to engage both against the *Devil* and the *Flesh*; if there was not Aid ready at hand superior to both of them. Therefore the Apostle, in the *Person* of an unconverted *Jew*, and *Gentile*, both of whom he had concluded under Sin, and in the most inoffensive *Metaschematism* of himself, had convicted each of them, in their Turns, of Wretchedness, cries out, *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death?* In the following Verse, he thanks God thro' *Jesus Christ* (which not being a direct Answer, it may be question'd, as Mr. *Locke* has observed, whether ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ, which is the *Remedy*, is not the true Reading, being a more direct Answer) and in the following Chap. † proposes the *only* Remedy for being freed from the Law of Sin and Death, and that is, *the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus*.

FOR the Spirit of Christ attending his Gospel (and he that has not his Spirit is no real Christian) as it is the Spirit of *Adoption*, is a new Principle to the carnal Mind, both for freeing it in its Anxiety from the Condemnation of Sin, arising from the transgress'd Law of *Moses*, and the unperform'd Law of the Mind, *i. e.* the Law of Nature; and from the ill Consequences of Death, which has no harm in it after its Sting is taken away, *viz.* the Guilt and condemning Power of Sin: And likewise a new Principle leading to eternal life, by directing, soliciting, and helping our Infirmities of the *Flesh* to a present Newness of Life, not to live after the *Flesh* but after the Spirit, or the Law of the Spirit, *i. e.* the Gospel.

† *Rom. viii. 2, 9, &c.*

FOR-

FORASMUCH as they who govern themselves by the old Principle or Rule of Action, the Law of the Members or *Flesh*, controuling the Mind and bringing it into Captivity to the Law of Sin, cannot, of themselves, free themselves from Sin; and as long as the Mind submits itself to that Law, it is *carnally* minded, is in a State of *Enmity against God*, cannot please him; because, being habitually subject to a contrary Master, and a contrary Law, it is not (at the same time) subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be; the Law of Contraries makes it impossible that it should. But when the Mind submits to the Law of the Spirit of Life (as all who put on Christ, or take the Profession of *Christian* upon them, are obliged to do) then it is *spiritually* minded, minding the Things of the Spirit, and being so guided and governed is pleasing to God; and the blessed Effect of that, is *Life and Peace*, Remission of Sins, and eternal Life: For the Spirit, that raised Christ from the Dead, dwells and resides in them likewise, to raise them from the Dead to eternal Life; as in *ver. 11*. Then being led by the *Spirit of God* as we were devoted in Baptism, and having that Testimony of our Conscience that we are govern'd by his Word, and act as becomes our Baptism and Calling in Christ, it beareth Witness with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God, *ver. 16*.

THE Apostle's Inference is very just, *Therefore Brethren, we*, as many as profess ourselves Christians, *are Debtors not to the Flesh, to live after the Flesh*, but to the Spirit, *to mortify the Deeds of the Flesh*, in order to enjoy the Redemption of the Body from the Grave, and the Glory that shall be reveal'd in the eternal Life ensuing, which the Faithful groan after in their mortal persecuted

CHAP. XV. persecuted Bodies; as all Mankind, unwilling to die and part with their Bodies for good and all, groan for a Resurrection in the constitutional Desires of their Nature. So far is it from the true State and Constitution of Things, that the Body is the *Prison* of the Soul, that it is its dear and ever desirable Partner, an essential Part of the Nature and Being of Man, to revive again and live for ever.

*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God are (adopted) Sons of God: And therefore Heirs hereafter with Christ, of that Redemption, and Glory, which he is now in Possession of. In the Hope of which incomparable Glory we are saved in the Sufferings of this present Life, counting them, tho' so much the Lot of Christians at that time, as nothing in the Comparison. Besides that Hope, Christians, who are led by the Spirit, and by being adopted to that future State, have this further Advantage, that the same Spirit is ready, invisibly, as the Things hoped for are invisible, to help our Infirmities; when in our Distresses we pray to God, and yet know not, in particular, what to pray for as we ought, whether for Increase of Patience under, or Deliverance from them; but the Spirit itself (which worketh those Desires of Glory and eternal Life in the Adopted) intercedeth for us with Groanings that can't be utter'd, i. e. silent, fervent, moving, and effectual, such as becomes adopted Sons, and according to the Will of God towards them; what is best for them at such pressing Junctures, which the Spirit knoweth, tho' they don't; and therefore supplies their mental Prayers with that silent Sorrow and Sighing which is the most moving: Silence proceeding from inward Grief at Sin is most loud, and moving*

moving to the Ears of Heaven! By Parity of CHAP. XV. Reason it may be concluded, that when the Matter of our other Prayers and Addresses are according to the *known Will of God*, the Holy Spirit excites such filial Freedom and Chearfulness, fervent Desires, devout Affections, and Postures of Mind, as are suitable to the respective Matter and Subject of them: For that, in respect both of *Matter and Manner*, is *praying in the Holy Ghost*, *Jud. 20.*

As God formerly in peculiarity of Favour dwelt among the *Jews* by *Tabernacle*, and by *Temple*, with a *Partition Wall* exclusive of the *Gentiles*; so, upon the Ruins of the Temple, when the Duration, or *for ever* of that Dispensation was at an end, the *Habitation of God thro' the Spirit* \* was erected indiscriminately in the Hearts of all who embraced the Faith of Christ; and the powerful miraculous Operations of the Spirit, so commonly display'd among the *Gentiles*, demonstrated to the *then Jews*, that God dwelt as visibly among the *Gentiles* as ever they could pretend he had done among them; and consequently that their *Peculium* and Adoption to Favour was at an end.

AND as the Use of a *Seal* was to render a thing *peculiar* and appropriate, so by the undeniable Gifts of the Holy Ghost, the *Gentiles*, to the ample Conviction of the other, were sealed and appropriated a *chosen Generation*, a *royal Priesthood*, a *peculiar People*, an *holy Nation*, † as well as they had been, being *sanctified* in Baptism by Water, and the *Renewal of the Holy Ghost* to all moral Holiness, as those had been by Circumcision to legal ceremonial Holiness. The

\* *Eph. ii. 22.*

† *1 Pet. ii. 9.*

Foundation,

CHAP. XV. Foundation, or Covenant, of God standeth sure, having this *Seal*, The Lord knoweth who are his, &c. And as their Kings, Priests, and Prophets, had their particular Anointing and Designation from Heaven; so Christians having receiv'd a general Anointing, or the thing couch'd under that Symbol, *i. e.* Sanctification and Consecration from the Holy Ghost, in allusion to the other, are stiled *Kings* and *Priests*, but no where *Prophets*; for that laborious Office, as to the *Teaching, Exhorting, and Reproving* Part, was appropriated to a particular Order of Men. Tho' Christ presenting those, who *suffer* for him, to the Father as *Kings* and *Priests* to reign with him, seems to mean a particular Glorification of Honour for the Disgrace and Contempt they met with on Earth for the Sake of his Religion: Yet, even upon Earth, to *serve* God and Virtue, is to *Rule* and be a *King*, in the most valuable Dominion over a Man's self; and moreover to *offer* to God *Sacrifices enough*, being the highest rational Honour in the greatest moral Liberty. Hence that of the *Stoicks*, *The wise Man only has true Liberty, he solely Reigns, he only enjoys Empire*. With respect to the other, there is a Passage in *Hierocl. Carm. Pyth. p. 24.* to this effect, "*The wise Man is only called the PRIEST of God; he is only acceptable to him; he only understands how to pray to him, and only knows how to honour him, without confounding the Dignity due to him. For in the first Place, he offers himself a Sacrifice, making his Mind the Image, and preparing himself to be his Temple.*"

It may be added, that as Man was made the Priest of Nature, to offer up to the Creator the Praises of all inanimate and irrational Creatures, so Christ has obliged every Christian to be a Priest

CHAP. XV. a Priest of Grace, for offering up to God continually his private Praise, Thanks, and Joy in the Lord, for his Redemption by his Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*. No Layman then should malign the distinction of *publick* Priest, ordained to offer up the *publick* Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving for that and all God's Mercies.

THOSE present extraordinary Gifts || of Christ's Spirit, after his bodily Departure, were a plain *Earnest*, and *first Fruits* to the then Christians, that Christ had actually taken Possession of that heavenly Inheritance he had promised his Followers; and likewise of his indisputable Power of giving Life, and quickening whom he would, by a Resurrection from the Dead, to Life eternal.

AND after the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit ceased, when their End ceased, *i. e.* when the external Evidence from the Testimony of Miracles, was finally seal'd and shut up: Such as the \* Word of extraordinary Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Gifts of Healing, working Miracles, Prophecy, discerning of Spirits, divers kinds of Tongues, and the Interpretation thereof; the Use and Design of them being, as it is affirmed, for Signs † not to them that believe, but to them that believe not; the miraculous Operations of the Spirit are principally called his *Gifts*, and every Receiver, was to minister according to the Analogy or Proportion of that particular Gift, Faith, or Talent in the Recipient in the first Days of Christianity; whilst his ordinary permanent Operations are called *Fruits*, growing in that Soil of

|| These are always distinguish'd by the Name *χαρίσματα*, or *τε πνευματικά*, very different from and not so lastingly valuable as the ordinary *Fruits* of the Spirit, *i. e.* moral Virtues, \* 1 Cor. xii. 8, &c. † xiv. 22.



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moral Virtues and Dispositions which are the Co-operation on Man's part. There remain'd, and remains, his ordinary Gifts and Aids, for the perpetual Edification of the Church in the *Spirit of Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Knowledge, of a sound Mind, of practical Faith, and Fear of the Lord, of Adoption, and Love*, in exclusion to the Spirit of *servile Fear and Bondage; Joy in the Holy Ghost; his Fellowship or Communion, his Comforts in Trouble; his bringing things to Remembrance; our Sanctification, and Regeneration by Water and Renewal of the Holy Ghost, and every good and perfect Gift* descending from above.

ALL these rest upon the Members of the Church as a *Right and Privilege*, conferrable and improveable at the Request of their own Prayers in Christ's Name for the *Spirit*; and their Improvement and Growth in these *Graces* depends upon the fructifying Use of their own Endeavours. And this seems to be the Reason, why we are never saluted with Grace and Peace in any of the *Epistles*, in the Name of the *Holy Spirit*, except perhaps that from the seven Spirits, *Rev. i. 4.* as we are in that of the *Father*, and the *Son*; because the Spirit confers those Gifts and Graces as an actual Right, in virtue of a *Promise* perform'd, given, and derived from the Father, and the Son; but we are divinely blessed in the *Communion of the Holy Ghost* at the End of *2 Cor.* And that Communication or Participation with the Spirit we are obliged to cultivate, and respect with such a Deference and Decency of Behaviour becoming the Gospel, as not to grieve † or vex, but obey and be led by him,

† *Eph. iv. 30.*

who

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who is the best *Comforter and Advocate* we have upon Earth.

FOR though we have the written Word (originally inspired by the Spirit) which is able to make wise unto Salvation; and the Facts and Arguments of the endearing Mercy, Goodness, and Love of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, are enough, as one would think, to warm our natural cold Hearts, and quicken our dead Powers, and be unto us externally a supernatural Assistance that comes from God, for leading our Feet into the Way of Peace. Though Faith in the true Mediator, that new *Medium*, which the Reason of Man could never, of itself, have discover'd for assuring him of *Acceptance* with God, as being supplied from Heaven, and convey'd in Scriptures wrote by Inspiration, may be called the *standing Inspiration* of the Christian's Reason for that Assurance, Confidence, Hope, and Trust. And though by natural Liberty of our Will we are *free to Good* as well as Evil: Yet we are so carried away with the Stream, and affected with the Griefs and Joys of *present Things*; and willingly follow the Fashions and false Maxims of the World; and the Biass of our own ill Habits, contracted from too much Indulgence to bodily Affections, and the hurry of worldly Affairs, *the bewitching of Naughtiness does obscure things that are honest, and the wandring of Concupiscence undermine the Simple of Mind.* *Wisd. iv. 12.* that we generally remain irresolute and unconstant, forgetful and indolent to spiritual Things, and heavenly Attainments.

NOR should we ordinarily attain them, if the Holy Spirit did not aid our Backwardness, quicken our Listness, and co-operate with our Endeavours after them. How many things do

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we

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we know in Holy Scripture that accompany Salvation, and yet don't know them, because we don't duly consider, and transcribe them into Action as we ought, nor draw the proper, *i. e.* practical Consequences from them? After we have look'd into the perfect Law of Liberty, how often are we, forgetful Creatures, like the Man beholding his natural Face in a Glass, who, after he is gone from it, straitway forgets what manner of Man he was?

THEREFORE is the Holy Spirit so ready and friendly to the Mind pressed down by the Body to bring things to Remembrance, \* to make its heedlessness more attentive, and its disposition to muse upon many things more serious and considerate of the one thing needful; holding the glass of Reflection up in the Memory, for the Understanding to look into again and again, till it has perused the whole Man; and so making the Rule of Duty inwardly present to the Mind, may literally be said to put *those Laws of the new Covenant inwardly in our Minds, and write them on our Hearts*, Heb. viii. 10.

NOT that the Spirit inspires new Truths, or Motives; but sets the Light of the Truth of Scripture for *Doctrine*, for *Reproof*, for *Correction*, for *Instruction in Righteousness* more clearly and convincingly before the *Understanding*; and the Motives to Duty more cogently and engagingly before the *Will*, to practical Purposes, as an *Advocate* of Virtue and Salvation; and so helps and assists the Client, the Servant of God and Christ, to make good his Cause of God and Christ,

\* *Plenus sum rimarum*, is a classical and natural Description of the Mind of Man; and that of a Fool is, *his inward Parts are like a broken Vessel*, Eccclus. xxi. 14.

and

and his own Happiness, against the Sophistry CHAP.  
and Temptations of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. XV.

AND as he is indeed our Fellow-Labourer in that Design of the Gospel, and no more than an Assistant in that Work of Regeneration, Sanctification, and Righteousness, that shews that he does not do the *whole* Work; but that our Endeavours are equally necessary to assist him to effect all that he undertakes for us. Therefore are we commanded to work out our Salvation with fear and trembling, from that very consideration that Assistance from him is present, because it is he that worketh in us both to will and do of his good Pleasure. He argues and debates with us from our own Concessions, from the *Faith* we have embraced; what manner of Persons it obliges us to be; and so by means of our *Faith* in Christ (whom God appointed Mediator of his *Will* and *Pleasure*) *worketh in us to will and do* according to the Gospel, which is *the Law of the Spirit of Life*: Thus he *purifies* the Heart through Faith, and through *Obedience* to the Truth. He recalls Vows and Resolutions for better living, the *Will's own* Acts and Deeds; and pleads them afresh before that Regent (*advocating with us below*, whilst Christ advocates for us above) to fix its natural Instability and Inconstancy.

THERE is the Inspiration of Truth, and the Inspiration of Lies; one from the Father of Truth, the other from the Father of Lies: the first through the Medium of right Reason, the right Mediator; the latter thro' the Medium of Inconsideration, Sensuality, and worldly Love. Thus the Understanding of Christians in general may, by asking it of God, be said to be *enlighten'd*,

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*en'd*, and to have Eyes open to perceive the Sense of Scripture, the wonderous things of God's law, and the practical use of the *Fear* of the Lord, the saving benefit of *Faith*, and of the great *Mystery* of Godliness, *God manifest in the Flesh*. And thus the *Governors* of our *Church* (as it is happily at this Day) are assisted with the *Spirit* of *Counsel* for giving Advice; of *Knowledge* for distinguishing the Ends from the Means of Religion; of *Wisdom* for applying the Means to the End (the principal Sense of Wisdom in Scripture;) and of a *sound Mind* for the Regulation of their whole Conduct, in their high Sphere of bringing Minds to Christ, the great Bishop of Souls.

Thus the unconstant desultory Will is more fix'd and steady to that which is good; by the frequent Importunities, urgent Advices, and repeated Suggestions of this divine Friend, watching the *mollia tempora fandi*, and then putting into the Heart good Desires. Thus good Desires and Affections are kindled in Prayer; and Comfort springs up in Trouble; and Cheerfulness lightens the burthen of Duty; by his suggesting and insinuating proper Thoughts and Ideas into the Mind, at those times. And so the whole Man, by degrees, becomes a favourite Subject of the Kingdom of God; which consists of *Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost; shedding abroad the love of God upon the Heart*, to its great Joy; and in the present Satisfaction of being adopted to his Favour, making the *Spirit* of future *Glory* rest upon it in all Joy and Peace in believing, that it may abound in Hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.\*

\* 1 Pet. iv. 14. Rom. xv. 33.

AND

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AND is not this an happy Benefit of Christianity, to have our natural Powers aided and assisted imperceptibly, and not the least compelling alteration offered to them? Thoughts and Ideas being kindly whisper'd and familiarly impress'd, as if they were our own Thoughts and Ideas, our natural Powers must be stronger and better furnish'd by having that super-addition, than they are without it. Therefore we are said to be *strengthen'd with Might through the Spirit in the inward Man to do his Will*, Eph. iii. 15. and to be able to do all things of Duty through Christ that strengthens us, Phil. iv. 13. And when the Spirit, which lusteth against the Flesh, gets the dominion over it, the obsequious Members change their Master, and their Work, from Uncleanliness and Iniquity, to Righteousness and Holiness.

BUT what endears it the more to us is, we have that additional supervening Aid as much in our Power, and as constantly at our Service, as we have our own natural Powers at our own Service, for our good; and that is by our Prayers for it, and by using that friendly which uses us so. For tho' it is the common Christian Benefit and Effect of God's Government over us in Christ, yet are we as much obliged to depend upon it in Prayer, and be thankful for it, as in the natural course of his Providence we are bound to pray for our daily Bread, and be thankful for that. And as there may be extraordinary Providences out of the common course in one Case, so there may, sometimes, be in the other an over-ruling Determination; never to be prayed for, or expected by any Man.

WHATEVER therefore we can do by our own natural Faculties, we can much better do, and

with more ease, by the help of another Power added to them; and what we could not naturally master and subdue, we may, this way, be enabled to accomplish; and consequently no Difficulty from without, nor Weakness, nor Disinclination from within, ought to be alledg'd against Duty; seeing we are confederate with a Power that is superior to all Opposition, and can, when it pleases, shew its Strength in our Weakness. For *if God be for us, who can be against us?* And when he is duly address'd unto, for the continuance of his Favour, we can have no doubt that *he who has begun a good Work in us, will perform it until the Day of Jesus Christ.\** We are bid to *covet earnestly the best Gifts*; the Holy Spirit in ordinary, is now that best Gift; and the way of coveting it earnestly, and improving that *Christian Talent* sedulously, is to be earnest in Prayer in the Name of *Christ* for it.

For he strives with us and for us; and never abandons us as long as there is any hope of our Recovery; nor is any left to a reprobate Mind, past feeling, till by repeated Refusals of his kindly Assistance, and obstinate Perseverance in Wickedness, they let him know there is no hopes of them; and as soon as they are lost to all Persuasion, they are lost also to Heaven, without a Miracle: which will not be bestow'd upon them; for as they came into the World a free Creature, so they shall go out of it again to the Place of their own chusing. God respects every thing as he has made it, guides and governs it according to its Nature. Nor shall any Grace of his be a *Force* upon any Man; nor will he move in us contrary to, but in concert

\* *Phil. i. 6.*

with

with the Movements of our own Powers, nor operate inwardly but in Conjunction with our own inward Operations: Notwithstanding he so frequently lays the Thoughts, Opportunities, and Impulses to Good before us, by his Providential ordering our outward Circumstances of Life.

For as a *Graff* put into a natural Stock accommodates itself to the natural Powers of the Stock, dwells in, and incorporates with it, not to destroy the Stock, or any of its Powers; but gradually mends and improves them to the Production of better Fruit; and by due Culture, and in time, all is converted into the *Nature* of the *Graff*, according to the Intention of grafting: So the *Spirit of Christ* grafted (suppose by *Baptism*) into the carnal Mind, the natural Stock of every Man, and afterwards duly cultivated, by degrees, as it grows to Maturity, draws the natural Powers of the carnal Mind to *itself*; and so you see the Fruits of the Spirit, \* *Love, Joy, Peace, Long-Suffering, Gentleness, Faith* [that believeth all things, the best of every Body] *Meekness, Temperance* (changing the Name of moral Virtues into *Christian Graces*, and Humanity into *Charity*) flourishing, where nothing otherwise would have grown but the contrary Fruits of the *Flesh*. And by this appointed Means and *Christian Culture*, of mortifying the Deeds of the *Flesh* by the Spirit, wild Fruit is changed into good, so good as to be pleasing to God. And as one is a Regeneration of natural Fruit in a physical Way, so the other is a *Regeneration* of moral Fruit, in a moral Way; the moral Pow-

\* *Gal. v. 22, 23.*



CHAP. XV. ers being still the same by Nature (free to Good, as they were to Evil) whilst they are freely led and directed to better Productions, by the Advantage of being incorporated with *Christ their Head*.

AND a great Change to moral Effects and good Fruits may be wrought by this invisible Origin of being *born of the Spirit*, as in Nature great Changes are made by the invisible blowing of the Wind where it listeth. However it is so necessary in the Institution of God, that there is no entering his Kingdom, without being born of that, and *Water*. As we are by natural Birth united to Christ in one Part of our Nature, Flesh and Blood, so by spiritual Birth the *Holy Spirit* seems necessary to unite our *Spirit*, the other Part of our Nature, to God and Christ by Adoption: He *who is thus join'd to the Lord, is one Spirit*, as before he was one Flesh. And he that is born of Water and the Spirit, if he is not quite taken out of the old Stock of the first *Adam*, yet the second *Adam Christ* is grafted in him, or he grafted into that new Stock, to produce all those Alterations for good, which the old one was deficient in.

THE Branches that depend upon the Vine for Life and Growth, and bearing Fruit and imbibing Juices in order to it, *can do nothing* as to either, *without* a vital Abiding in and Communication with it: And Christ is the *true Vine* in the same Sense of imbibing from him, as he is the *true Bread*, in the digesting Sense of his Doctrine; and his Flesh was as much Bread or Meat indeed, as his Blood was Wine and Drink indeed, for maintaining indeed that vital spiritual Communion, in imbibing and digesting his Doctrine

CHAP. XV. Doctrine (and holding Communication with the Head, by duly commemorating *his Death*, the *capital Doctrine* of his Religion, in the Lord's Supper, that After-Explanation in Fact of eating his Flesh and drinking his Blood) according to his own immediate verbal Explication, *The Words I speak unto you are Spirit and Life*, \* *i. e.* when the Words *Vine, Flesh, Blood, Bread or Wine* are *Emblems* and *figurative Expressions* that cannot, nor were ever intended to signify *literally*, the *moral*, emblematical, not the literal, is the true Sense or *Spirit* of those Expressions: Just as *Spirit* is opposed to *Flesh*, and *Letter*, in the Types and Ceremonies of the *Jews*; one killeth, the other giveth Life, and Meaning.

As God is the Giver of our Faculties, and Exciter and Encourager to Good, whatever of that Nature is the free and wise Product of them, is, at the same time, the Gift of God; and the Praise and Glory is due to him: Mean time we shall not miss of our Reward for following his Counsel; and consenting to be led by it to our own Happiness; because that Good would not have been done, if God had not bestow'd the Faculty, the Opportunity, the Motive and Direction for it. Thus he is said to *give a new Heart, and a new Spirit*, yet he requires us to cast away our Transgressions in order to *make ourselves a new Heart and a new Spirit*, † There are many Expressions of the like Import, resolvable into the like Interpretation.

AND as he governs free Agents according to their Nature, and hinders not the bad Effects that result from the Determination of their own Choice, he is said in a figurative and foreign

\* *Joh. vi. 63.*

† *Ezek. xviii. 31.*

CHAP. XV. Sense to *barden* the Heart; whilst he has no Hand in it, any farther, than permitting Sin to produce its own Effects, and operate upon the Heart, according to the hardening Deceivableness of its Nature. He never gives any Man up to a fatal Blindness and Hardness of Heart, till he is irrecoverable by Persuasion and rational Motives; *Deus non deserit nisi deferentem*. Or, in other Words, *Since you have forsaken me, I will forsake you also—You have not forsaken me, but your own selves, saith the Lord, 2 Esdr. i. 25.*

THE comfortable Truth therefore lies in the Middle between the two Extremes, which have both had their Run, and prevailed in their Turns; the irresistible Grace of God, on the one hand; and the no Occasion of the internal Aids of his Spirit, on the other. We ought certainly to covet earnestly the *best Gifts*, and strive to regain, as much as we are able, that *Degree* of Perfection of human Liberty, wherein Man was first created. Every *perfect*, as well as good Gift comes from God. He only enjoys Liberty in its absolute Perfection; by being *immutably free* from all Defects, and from all Inclination to Evil, which is a Defect. That *Immutability* is peculiar and essential to the *supreme Good*; nor is there any *good* in that Sense, but one, and that is *God*: He is only *infallible* in Understanding, and therefore *impeccable* in Will; and neither one nor the other are communicable to any Creature. Therefore the Degrees of Good, or Perfection of Liberty *relative* to their several Stations, communicated to the rational Creatures he has made, is temper'd with a *natural Mutability*, or Possibility of *inclining* to Evil, and degenerating from what they are. Such are all the Angels. *He chargeth even his Angels with Folly.* The Angels being

being placed in their Paradise or State of Probation, not as Man was by a primitive Pair and Succession, extraduce, but altogether at once in their own produced Persons, some kept not their *first Estate*; and they that stand being *capable* of falling, are chargeable with Folly, by being capable of the Folly of thinking themselves independent of God, or infallible like him. And therefore Fallibility and Frailty from Angel down to Man is continually propt up by various gradations of Dependency, Recourses, and Religion unto God.

THO' Man, God's youngest Son, was endow'd with Liberty and Reason a little lower than the Angels, as much lower as discursive Reason is to intuitive Dispatch, and choice of Will with a Tempter, is to one without one, by being station'd, for a time, in the midst of sensual Appetites and Objects, whence more and more Occasion and Inclination to Evil; still the Liberty, suited to his Station, was perfect in its kind, having his *primitive* Inclinations cast and moulded upright and entire towards Good in dependence upon his Maker, the Author of all his Happiness; that dependent, imitative Image of himself, wherein God had fashion'd his natural Liberty and moral Agency with a prevailing *Bias* and *Inclination* within towards *Good*, liable to be altered by nothing but yielding to Sin thro' outward Temptation; but after yielding to it, the *Bias* turn'd to the *other Side*, and made the great Alteration and Disfigurement in the Image of God; what was unknown before, a *Temptation* from *within* ever after sprang up, to solicit the natural Liberty and moral Agency; that Temptation from within join'd to Temptation from without stood therefore in the

CHAP. the greater Need of the supervening, balancing  
XV. Assistance, and Advocation of the Holy Spirit.

MAN had continued in his first Aptitude and Bias, it may be, for many Generations, had not the *Tempter* (the *first Lyar* and *Hypocrite* in the World, and the Father of all Lies and Hypocrisy since) so soon deceiv'd and prevail'd with the false Pretence of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, before Lying or Hypocrisy, or the moral Evil of Disobedience were known in the sublunary World: And by deceiving, *murder'd* the Perfection of his pristine Liberty, and inverted the prevailing Bias of his Constitution from Good to Evil. The corruptible Body with its corrupt Affections has press'd upon, and too often insulted, ever since, our Longing and Desire after conscious primitive Liberty, and Rectitude; and a *native* Love of Truth, and a *natural* Abhorrence of Falshood and Hypocrisy as our greatest Enemy, still lives in us, as if every Man had been present with, and Partaker of that Transaction.

So far is Freedom to moral Evil from being the true Liberty of Man, that it is actually his Weakness, Degeneracy, and too frequently his Servitude and Captivity. He has deviated very much ever since from *real* Good; which is the true Object of true Liberty; and fluctuated greatly in Error both about Good, and about Liberty; and, because of those Errors, there is a Necessity for Laws to curb and restrain the ill Effects of them: till the Religion of the Mediator *Christ Jesus* came to shew him his true Good, and recover him to his true Liberty, and strengthen and perfect him in it, as he grows up to that greater Perfection of it, at the Resurrection, to a new and better Body, called the  
*glorious*

*glorious Liberty of the Sons of God*; by its glorious CHAP.  
divine Means, Aids, Motives, and Helps; to XV.  
which all are entitled, who embrace it sincerely;  
and all who reject, are excluded the Benefit of  
any of them.

AND what are the Restraints of the Gospel upon the temerity of Man's Choice of Evil, but perfect Peace and Freedom to our rational Spirit, and the compleatest Liberty of Mind that can be desired in this Life? And what better verifies the ancient Observation of *Job*; \* *Behold the Fear of the Lord, that is Freedom, and to depart from Evil is true Liberty*? The *Truth* of the Gospel, that *perfect Law of Liberty*, is that only which makes Men *free indeed*.

If therefore the *Deists* were indeed true in their pretended Respect, or consistent to the Obedience of the Law of Nature, they so much assume to glory in, they would gladly come into the *Christian* Measures in earnest; which glory in nothing so much, as in improving Man's Liberty, and increasing his Inclination to perform that Law.

I PRESENT them with a Passage from Bishop *Taylor*. "The Case of moral Actions and spiritual is all one; for that Action is moral which is done in Obedience to a Law; and a spiritual Action is no more; save only it relates to another Law, to the Evangelical, or spiritual Law of Liberty: But in the Nature of the Thing, it is the same; and one may as well be chosen as the other, when they are equally taught and commanded, and propounded under the same proportionable Amability; and till they be so propounded, they

\* Chap. xxviii. 28.

" are

CHAP. XV. "are not equally Laws. Besides this, the denying Liberty in all moral Things of Manners, in all Things of Obedience to the Laws of God and Man, and the allowing it in all Things under no Law, is a Destruction of the very Nature and Purpose of Liberty. For the only End of Liberty is to make us capable of Laws, of Virtue and Reward, and to distinguish us from Beasts, by a distinct Manner of Approach to God, and a Way of Conformity to him proper to us; and except in the Matter of Virtue and Vice, except in order to Reward and Punishment, Liberty and Choice were good for nothing: For to keep ourselves from Harm, from Poison, and Enemies, a natural Instinct, and lower Appetites, would serve our Needs, as well as the Needs of Birds and Beasts. And therefore to allow it where it is good for nothing, and to deny it, where only it can be useful and reasonable, and fit to be done, and is given by the wise Father of all his Creatures, must needs be amiss." \*

I SHUT up this Head with the Words of the Apostle, *Heb. xiii. 20, 23.* which include the three Offices of our Mediator, *King, Prophet, Priest*, and the inward Aids I have been treating of. *Now the God of Peace that brought again from the Dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, thro' the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good Work to do his Will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his Sight.*

\* Duct. Dub. Book IV. p. 752, 753.



## CHAP. XVI. Of EXTERNAL MOTIVES.

UNDER this Head might be comprehended Example; which has an immediate lively Influence upon such imitating Creatures as we are, kindling in us any laudable Action that is done before us, shaming and dissolving all Objection of Slothfulness, or Impracticableness. Nor can any System of Religion pretend to a perfect Example of moral Behaviour but the Christian.

I MIGHT mention the Wisdom, Decency, Honour, and Reputation of Virtue; and the Folly, Baseness, Shame, and Odiousness of Sin, as having the Devil for its Author. And the *Author of Christianity as old*, &c. says, "Nothing operates more strongly, than the Desire Men have of being in Esteem, Credit, and Reputation with their Fellow-Creatures; nor is it to be obtain'd without acting upon the Principles of natural Justice, Equity, Benevolence\*." If this is the strong Principle of Religion with our Author, Christianity inculcates those Virtues far beyond his natural Religion.

I PASS by the Love and Goodness of God in sending his Son into the World; and the reciprocal Love resulting from the common Gra-

\* P. 16.



CHAP. titude of human Nature; that has been often  
XVI. mention'd before.

I MIGHT instance the Motive of public Spirit from the Precepts, of *not looking every one on his own Things, but on the Things also of others*; and the Duty of *laying down our Lives for the Brethren*.

I MIGHT hint at, what is very little mention'd, the Beauty and Loveliness of Virtue. Seeing the Scripture becomes all things to all Men, that it may save some; accommodates itself to all Tempers and Dispositions; the Slothful and Diligent, Sanguine and Cold, Generous and Disingenuous, Polite and Uneducated; all have Motives and respective Arguments adapted to them, to excite them severally to good living.

BUT I select the EXTERNAL MOTIVES exciting *Hope* and *Fear*, as what chiefly moves and affects human Nature, as we are made *accountable* Creatures to the Author of our Being. The Christian Hope is establish'd upon the sure Basis of *glorious Rewards* in a future Life; which *Faith* in God's *Promise* in the Mediator, in whom all the Promises are *yea, and in him Amen*, from the Fall of Man, is realized into a *Substance* like their own Home, a Pledge of the best Reality and State of Man, a *certain* Expectation of, and Dependance upon *the Things hoped for*, and into an *Evidence of Things not seen*, as operative and convincing, as if they had been seen; overcoming the present World, and the worst Thing in it, Death in its worst Appearance; despising also Crowns, the finest Thing in it; and living above all its delusive Enjoyments, as Strangers, Sojourners, Pilgrims, steadily bending their Course to their proper, and that a better Country,

try, which had their Hearts, and influenced CHAP.  
their Actions; as may be seen in the Catalogue XVI.  
of those glorious Martyrs and Confessors of that *Recompence of Reward*, Heb. xi. And if there were such steadfast lively Efforts of this Hope before the Advent of Christ, what abundance more must there have been, since *his bringing Life and Immortality to light by his Gospel*? It being matter of perpetual Thanksgiving unto God ever since, for having, *according to his abundant Mercy, begot us to a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead* \*.

HAPPINESS being the uninterrupted Inclination of our Nature, and Misery its contrary Aversion; the wise Author of our Being has wrought the Passions of Hope and Fear in us as Springs of Action, and a Spur to Industry. The Body might be alive, but immoveable like a Tree; the Understanding would grow languid, and the Will unactive, if the other did not bring in the Objects or Things that concern them to be occupied about. Reason could have no concern in Futurity was there neither Hope, nor Fear: And what is hope and fear of Rewards and Punishments but a State of *Discipline* of native Self-love and Preservation, and of its Tendency to Happiness, and Avoidance of Misery? They are the Wings and Sails of the Soul in her several Motions. All the Passions are therefore given as domestick Instruments in every body's Hand for perfecting and accomplishing, or degrading and injuring his Nature, just as they are applied, or misapplied; to the carrying on the Good and Interest of the inferior Animal, or the superior Rational Part of his Constitution;

\* 1 Pet. i. 3.

CHAP. or both jointly together, in Subordination one  
XVI. to the other. Hope and Fear regarding Futurity,  
with all the other Passions, spring out of *Love*,  
as will appear a few Pages afterwards; Happiness or Misery, here and hereafter, depend upon the regular Conduct, or irregular Misapplication of our Love. If its *supreme* Respect is placed upon God and the Happiness propounded and promised with him in the Life to come, that supreme Good is infinitely abundant to fill up every Man's Happiness, being commensurate to all his Desires; and, at one and the same Time, to satisfy the Happiness of all Men, all together, without any Envy or the least Dissatisfaction at their Share; then all the other Passions placidly fall under due Government. But if the same Respect is *misplaced*, and for so long as it is so, upon worldly Things, which put all together are unable to make any one Man happy, and being limited in their Enjoyment, impossible to be possessed by all together without the Lusts of Covetousness, Ambition, &c. whence Wars and Fighting, and all Disorders in Society; Rebellion of Passions against Reason and Religion; and, without Amendment, everlasting Misery. The Office of Reason then is not to suspend their Influence, but direct and regulate them to right Objects; and estimate those Objects by the Measures of Comparison, how much our innate Desire of Happiness and Aversion to Misery will be affected, and how lastingly involved therein.

AND because he knows our Degeneracy, that as long as we continue in this World we are more affected with *natural* Good and Evil, or Pleasure and Pain in present Sensation, and Belief of that which is future, than we are with moral Good and Evil, *i. e.* *right* or *wrong*, fit  
or

or *unfit*; therefore has he graciously made our CHAP.  
Duty as to the latter, to be our Interest as to XVI.  
Pleasure and Pain, in the truest and most lasting Sense, wisely and constitutionally connecting them together: And in order to move and excite us to the former, commonly approaches and interests himself in us, by Motives drawn from the latter; a very good Argument that the Author of Revelation was also the Author of our Nature. But to derogate from these unquestionable right Motives of Revelation, so surely founded in our Nature, is to impeach God, as if he did not know the Principles whereof he hath made us; or was not privy to the Degeneracy, approaching near to a moral Impotency, into which we are fallen. Tho' Motives, or Aids, don't alter the nature of Virtue, yet they so stimulate and assist the weak Nature of Man, and the ineffectual looking-on Power of Reason, as to render that practicable and prompt in Performance, which would otherwise hardly be feasible.

To be wholly influenced by *present* Pleasure or Pain, is to act not like a moral, but a *natural* Agent, or Brute; but if we duly used our Reason to weigh and adjust the fleeting, insincere, and soon after repented Pleasure that tempts to Sin, with its everlasting Pain hereafter; or the short painful Endurance providentially attending upon Virtue and a good Conscience in this Life, with the ever-over-flowing Rivers of Pleasure in that which is to come; which is most reasonable, and most for the Interest of our Being to be preferred, we should never mistake, nor fail of pleasing God; tho' in our uneducated Understandings we happen'd not to make out *a priori* the Obligations to Virtue from the eternal Reasons

of Right or Wrong; or not perceive enough the charming Beauty of its Practice from the Relations and Fitness of Things, or Persons. Because God has been so exactly careful in consulting the Salvation of all, in the Revelation of his Will, as to affix that, which *all* understand, (the Ignorant as well as the more knowing) *eternal* Happiness and Misery, to the Things that are pleasing, and displeasing to him. And he has not only encourag'd, but *commanded* our Hope and Trust in the one, and Fear in the other; as the final Effect and Adjudication of his Favour and Friendship, his Anger and Displeasure. And it is in this way he commands us to shew our Wisdom; which begins in his Fear, and is perfected in his Love.

EARTHLY Passions in fact often over-bear Reason with Respect to wise Conduct for this World, much more to the Prejudice of the Wisdom that is from above; *Hierocles* represents the Mind carried by its Passions inclining to Sin, like so many *Weights* of *Lead* hanging upon it, ὡς πέρ τισι μολυβδίσιν ὑποφέρεται πρὸς κακίαν. A *Weight* which the Apostle advises to *lay aside*. And therefore there ought to be the greater Weight of more precious Things to poise, and recover it out of that sinking Condition, viz. the *exceeding* WEIGHT of *Glory*. The *Duration* and *Greatness* of REWARDS and PUNISHMENTS hereafter are revealed accordingly from Heaven to be an *Over-balance* for the *irregular* Passions of this Life; that no Hope, nor Fear, Joy, nor Suffering, Love, nor Hatred, may stand even in the Scales with what is to come; but be weighed down always exceedingly, with the *exceeding and eternal Weight* of *Glory*; and this *Counter-balance* of what is to come

come when this short Life is ended, from antagonist Objects certain to our Belief, is that which is ordained of Heaven, beyond all the Rules of human Philosophy, for securing the Tranquillity of Life. And these being adjusted to our present Nature as a present necessary Discipline, are not only true genuine Motives, but so absolutely necessary, that there would be very little Consideration of our Ways; less Virtue, and no Endurance of Difficulties for its sake, without those Sanctions to the Laws of it.

THAT *some* Virtuous shou'd fall short and be disappointed of the external Favour and Blessing of God in this World, is intended to preserve our Faith in *another*, in due Health and Vigour, by keeping up its Pulse in a breathing Exercise after a better State of Things: For, if every righteous Person was to be infallibly prosperous, and exempt from the common Hardships and Oppressions of Life, Virtue would become a worldly mercenary Thing. Where would Patience, or Trial of Perseverance, or Victory over the World appear, or the particular Crown for suffering wrongfully be look'd for? If no righteous Person was to be prosper'd, but wholly and universally neglected, where would be the Appearance of *Providence* left for succouring such in Distress? But if some Care, and very often signally too, is taken of them here, that is ample Consolation, there will be more taken of them in an after-State. Therefore are they required to cast the sure and steadfast *Anchor* of *their Hope*, *within the Vail*\*, to enable them to ride out the Storms, and stem the Tide of worldly Affections and Desires impetuously rolling

\* Heb. vi. 19.

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this way and that way; and to make *that* their Steadfastness, *that* their Stand to Perseverance, *holding the Possession of it immoveable* \*, because, the Things themselves are so, having God, not Man, for their Builder and Maker; whereas Hope in the uncertain future Things of this World is but a Name, and the Possession of them little better. St. Paul exercised himself in this very Hope to keep a Conscience void of Offence †; and the Ground of living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World is laid in the same ‡.

BESIDES, if God in his great Condescension to our future Happiness, and to our present Imperfection and Ignorance, wherein it really consists, has made his Laws and Commandments so many Directions and Qualifications for it, in the future Fruition of the Society of himself, and of good Spirits: And if that is the real Design of present Obedience to the sociable Laws of Virtue; why should we forget the Design, whilst we are practising the Qualification? If the Commandments are *Directions* to our Happiness, it must necessarily follow, *That in keeping of them there is great Reward.*

WISE Men shew their Wisdom generally by beginning at the End of the Action. The *escaping the Pollutions that are in the World*, and being made Partakers of the Divine Nature; the *cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit*, and the *purifying ourselves as God is pure*, are committed to the Efficacy of this hope ||, in Promises, exceeding great and exceeding precious; for which cause we are said to be *saved*

\* Heb. x. 23.

† Acts xxiv. 15.

‡ Tit. ii. 13.

|| 2 Pet. i. 4. 2 Cor. vii. 1. 1 John iii. 3.

by

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by it \*. Why then should any be induced to suspend their Hope in another Life, whilst they are doing the Will of God in this? It is to all intents and purposes invidiously taking away that Spring of motion, which the Constitution of our Nature and the Wisdom of God have put into us towards virtuous Living, and then bantering and bidding us move in the ways of Virtue, heartless, and unconcern'd; which is the same thing as to stand still. That Man was at first made prone to Good, appears from the first Law or Covenant, whereof Punishment is only express'd as the Sanction. But since the great Change in his natural Tendency to Evil, REWARDS become necessary to be express'd as a Sanction of the *second* Covenant, to animate and recover him to his Good; and likewise PUNISHMENT, to awaken his Consideration, that he might not imagine that the *whole* of his Evil consisted in missing that Reward.

WHEREAS it is the important Concern we have in the final Issue, and everlasting Result, that interests us so much in the Ways of Virtue; and the Hope of the Prize set before us, that quickens us in the Race, and gives Caution to our Feet. The Author of *Christianity as old, &c.* acknowledges † “the Spring of all the Actions of the Creatures is their own Good: *We love God*, says he, from 1 John iv. 19. *because he first loved us*; and consequently our Love to him will be in proportion to our Sense of his Goodness to us.” Yet, according to his usual Fairness, shamefully mangles the Argument of the Apostle, and suppresses the Sense of the divine Goodness, the very Meaning of the Words,

\* Rom. viii. 24.

† Pag. 13.

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which



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which he would have every body else insensible of, as well as himself: If you ask the Instance of God's first loving us, the Apostle had declared it just before, *ver. 9, 10. In this was manifested the Love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him. Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins.* That Goodness of God in shewing us our own Good, the only way to his Favour, and our own Happiness, is indeed intended of him, to be the true Spring of our Duty and Obedience to him.

BUT this Source of Virtue in loving God, and keeping his Commandments, is utterly rejected and despised by all those of our Author's Sentiments. They maintain the Sufficiency of Reason to find out every Virtue, and all the Ways to God's Favour, independent of any external Revelation from him; and likewise the Sufficiency of Virtue for its own Reward; "*that rational Actions carry with them their own Rewards, and irrational their Punishment:*" That the attractive Beauty and intrinsic Excellence of Virtue is sufficient Inducement to practice it, without any Eye to Self-Advantage, or the external Motives from Revelation. But how contrary to these are the Sentiments of Mr. Lock, who was a Bigot to nothing but Reason? "How," says he, hath this one Truth [the Resurrection and Ascension of our Saviour] chang'd the Nature of things in the World? and given the Advantage to Piety over all that could tempt or deter Men from it. The Philosophers indeed shew'd the Beauty of Virtue: They set her off so as drew Mens Eyes and Approbation to her: But leaving her un-

dowed,

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dowed, very few were willing to espouse her. "The generality could not refuse her their Esteem and Commendation; but still turn'd their Backs on her and forsook her, as a Match not for their turn. But now there being put into the Scales, on her side, *an exceeding and immortal Weight of Glory*; Interest is come about to her, and Virtue now is visibly the most enriching Purchase, and by much the best Bargain. That she is the Perfection and Excellency of our Nature; That she is herself a Reward, and will recommend our Names to future Ages, is not all that can now be said of her. 'Tis not strange that the learned Heathens satisfied not many with such airy Commendations. It has another Relish and Efficacy, to persuade Men that if they live well here, they shall be happy hereafter. Open their Eyes upon the endless unspeakable Joys of another Life; and their Hearts will find something solid and powerful to move them. — Upon this Foundation, and upon this only, Morality stands firm. — This makes it more than a Name\*." "Tho' human Law-givers, say the Author of *Christianity as old*, &c. are forc'd to have recourse to Punishments, which are not connected with the things they forbid; yet a Being of infinite Power is not thus straiten'd, but may make one the necessary Consequence of the other: And indeed how can it be otherwise, since Good and Evil have their Foundation in the essential Difference of Things, and their Nature is fix'd and immutable: And consequently our Happiness depends on the intrinsic Nature of the one, and our Misery on the intrinsic Nature of the

\* *Reasonabl. of Christ.* p. 287, &c.

"other."

CHAP. "other \*." This shews his true Sentiments, notwithstanding his occasional mention of future Rewards and Punishments, that hereafter no positive Rewards or Punishments are allotted to Mens Actions, but that the natural Consequence of those Actions in the inward Sense Men have of them, is the sole and only Reward and Punishment; which will be considered afterwards.

THESE must be acknowledged highly refined Principles of Virtue; sublime soaring Notions, calculated rather for the Admiration, than the real Practice and Service of it; to attract and engage the Minds of Philosophers *only*, and overlook and dismiss every body else from being Followers of it. *He that can receive it, let him receive it.* If the Promise of this Life added to that which is to come effectually induces but few sincere Votaries; the Number must be greatly diminished, if the future World must be thrown out of Consideration, and denied its proper Influence; which is so peculiarly appropriated to secure and promote its Practice in all its Branches.

IT must be confessed likewise, That these Sentiments, such as they are, are perfectly consonant to the System of *modern Deism*. For, if the future World, and our happy or unhappy Condition there, can only be known by Revelation, it must be inconsistent with their recommendation of Virtue, to admit of Motives drawn from thence, as long as they reject Revelation. The witty Earl of *Rocheſter* spoke their Sentiments at once, "That they were equally disengaged of Rewards as Punishments; one as too high to attain by our slight Services; the other too extreme to be inflicted for Sin †."

\* Pag. 21, 22.

† *Some Passages of his Life*, p. 54.

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The Vulgar of the Heathen World seem to have had much the Advantage over most of their Philosophers in this matter. They for the most part tenaciously believed a future State, where the Wicked in general were to be punished, and the Good rewarded; tho' the Particulars of it were as ridiculous, as Poety could invent it: Still the Thing, in its confused Notion, had an Influence upon their Actions. Whilst their Philosophers made a shift to dispute themselves very cunningly out of the Belief of it: Conjecture and Problem was all the Certainty they had to rely upon, which had no more Influence than a Dream. *Somnia sunt non docentis, sed optantis* ||. They could shew their Eloquence fast enough in praising Virtue, whilst they left the Practice to the Vulgar, and made good the Saying, *Virtus laudatur, & alget*.

THUS *Sadoc* the Founder of the *Sadducees*, giving Ear to his Master *Antigonus*, "who often inculcates to his Scholars, that they ought not to serve God in a servile Manner with respect to the Rewards, but out of the filial Love and Fear only, which they ow'd unto him, inferred from thence, that there were no Rewards at all after this Life, no Resurrection, no future State, but all the Rewards which God gave to those who served him were in this Life only. \*"

THE primitive *Epicureans*, tho' they denied Providence having any concern with the present World, yet declared their Adherence to Virtue for the sake of the Delight and Pleasure of it. The *Stoicks* admitted Providence in part, and Fate in part; but when Pain and Suffering hap-

|| *Cicero*. \* *Prideaux's Connection*, Vol. II. P. 1. p. 68.

pen'd

CHAP. pen'd to stand between Virtue and its own sole  
XVI. Reward in this Life, and offered to rectify their  
Notion, and place their unsupported Heroism  
somewhere else, they were forced to fly in the  
Face of Nature, and deny with Tears in their  
Eyes, and aking Hearts, That Pain or Suffering  
in this World was any Evil. The Case of *Possidonius*  
is well known.

AND as nothing can be a Support under Evil  
but the Hope of *after-Good*, their Distress was  
very pitiful in the want of Revelation to assure  
them of that after-Good. For the Hopes of that  
after-Good is a Balance to the Evils, Misfor-  
tunes, and Inequalities of Life present; and the  
proper Recourse to and Anticipation of that,  
brings the Happiness of this Life upon a Level  
and Equality. "Those just Measures (says  
"Mr. Lock) of Right and Wrong, which Ne-  
"cessity had any where introduced, the Civil  
"Laws prescribed, or Philosophy recommend-  
"ed, stood not on their true Foundations.  
"They were look'd on as Bonds of Society and  
"Conveniencies of common Life, and laudable  
"Practices. But where was it that their *Obligation*  
"was thoroughly known and allowed,  
"and they receiv'd as Precepts of a Law; of  
"the highest Law, the Law of Nature? That  
"could not be without a clear Knowledge and  
"Acknowledgment of the Law-maker, and the  
"great Rewards and Punishments, for those that  
"would or would not obey them. †"

BUT when St. Paul address'd his Audience,  
at *Athens*, which consisted of these two sort of  
Philosophers ||, he insinuates not one Word into  
their darling Notions of the Beauty of Virtue,

† Reasonabl. of Christ. p. 275. || Acts xvii. 18, &c.

or its Self-competency for a Reward; nor yet CHAP.  
exhorted them to Repentance from the Baseness XVI.  
and Turpitude of Vice; but from the solid  
Topicks of Religion, the Consideration of God  
as Maker, Benefactor, and Judge of the World  
in Righteousness; acquainting them with the  
particular Person, *Jesus*, ordain'd to be the final  
Punisher, and Rewarder of Mens Actions; and  
therefore were commanded, in his Name, to  
Repent; upon the Assurance given of that Ap-  
pointment, from God's raising him from the  
Dead. This was adding the Knowledge of the  
*Saviour of the World* to the true Creed of Natu-  
ral Religion, viz. *That God is, and that he is a*  
*Rewarder of those that diligently seek him.*

A CREED undoubtedly derived down upon  
the World, from the Original *Promise* of the  
Mediator. And they, before the Flood, who  
diligently came to God, and worshipp'd him in  
Virtue of the *Second Article* of it, worshipp'd, in  
effect, in Virtue of the Mediator, through whom  
God made himself, according to the Intent of  
Promise, a *Rewarder* of those who walk'd in his  
ways; and consequently a Punisher of those who  
did not: and to convince the Ante-diluvian  
World, that *he*, the Lover of Virtue, and not  
Virtue itself, was the Rewarder of its Servants,  
translated *Enoch* to himself; a Demonstration  
that another World, not this, was, from the  
Beginning, intended to be the Reward of that  
Faith in God, and that Righteousness which  
flowed from it. And *Job* after the Flood, with-  
out any express Prophecy to revive and support  
the Faith of that *Promise* (which was the *Intent*  
of *Prophecy* \* in virtue of the Tradition of it,

\* As the present Bishop of *Salisbury* has excellently made  
appear.

CHAP. XVI. was accepted of God, and had that Confidence in his Redeemer as to expect † the Resurrection of his Body from him. So that as Prophecy went out from the Beginning, to one Lineage, wherein it was to have its Accomplishment in the actual Appearance of the Mediator; so the Tradition of it went out also from the Beginning to all the rest of the World; and God is no Respecter of Persons, but in every Nation he that feareth him, and worketh Righteousness in consequence of that Faith, is accepted of him.

IN the first Covenant God is expressly mention'd as a Punisher, which implies a Rewarder; in the second expressly mention'd as a Rewarder: *The Wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God eternal Life through Jesus Christ.* Man being for the Transgressions of the first Covenant under a State of temporal Punishment, the mention and Belief of God as a Rewarder was most wanting, and agreeable to human Nature, to recover the Balance of the Passions to their primitive Submission to Reason. That Speciality of Belief, as necessary to Religion, as the general Persuasion that God is, directly leads to, and implies Rewards in a future Life. For, if God does not in Fact, always reward his Servants in this, it demonstrably follows that he will as assuredly do it in another World, as that he exists. Many of the better Philosophers, as *Socrates, Epictetus*, who joined Profit and Self-advantage to Virtue, and made them inseparable in the Issue, and in the Care of the Gods, seem to have been Retainers to this very Faith. *Arian* upon the latter argues, "That if Piety and Profit did

† See this clearly made out in the same Book, by the same Author.

" not

CHAP. XVI. " not go together, Piety would be preserv'd in  
" none; the Reason is, because nothing is so na-  
" tural to us, as to affect and pursue our own  
" Advantage; so that if you place what is holy  
" and just in that which *profits*, you preserve  
" them; but if you separate what is honest from  
" what is advantageous, you destroy what is just  
" and honest, as being weighed down by Pro-  
" fit \*." *Socrates* is represented by *Cicero de Leg. 1.* as openly detesting those who first di-  
vided the Profitable from the Honest, and thought  
that Gain was not *confined* to the Bounds of Vir-  
tue, because he held that Doctrine to be the  
Source of all Crimes.

How very false therefore, as being so very unnatural, is the Religion of *modern* Deists? Who are so romantick in their Commendations, and pretended Pursuits of the Beauty and Charms of Virtue, as to esteem the Motives of Profit, Self-Advantage, or future Rewards, mean, forbid, and servile. And as this faulty Notion is systematically espous'd by a much more considerable Pen, than the Author of *Christianity as old, &c.* I proceed to consider, and refute his pernicious Sentiments, from the Nature of Things. This very Author acknowledges, "The Sum of  
" Philosophy is, to learn what is *just* in Society,  
" and *beautiful* in Nature, and the Order of the  
" World †."

THEY are chiefly contain'd in the famous *Inquiry concerning Virtue*. "Nor do we say, that  
" he is a *good Man*, when having his Hands tied  
" up, he is hinder'd from doing the Mischief he  
" designs, or (which is in a Manner the same)

\* Lib. I. cap. 27. Lib. II. cap. 22. Lib. III. cap. 5.

† *Charact.* Vol. III. pag. 161.

when



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“ when he abstains from executing his ill Purpose, thro’ a Fear of some impending Punishment, or thro’ the Allurements of some exterior Reward. || ” This noble Author makes the *Goodness* or *Illness* of Man to depend upon his *Affection*; who then only, as it afterwards follows, “ is supposed *Good*, when the Good or Ill of the System to which he has relation, is the immediate Object of some Passion or Affection moving in him.” “ Whatsoever therefore is done which happens to be advantageous to the Species [or Publick] thro’ an Affection merely towards Self-good, does not imply any more Goodness in the Creature than as the Affection itself is good. Let him, in any Particular, act ever so well, if at the Bottom it be that selfish Affection alone which moves, he is in himself still Vicious. Nor can any Creature be consider’d otherwise, when the Passion towards Self-good, *tho’ ever so moderate*, is his real Motive in the doing that, to which a natural Affection for his Kind ought by right to have inclined him \*.”

So that Self-Affection or Consideration of *private* Good or Interest, tho’ ever so moderate, tho’ consistent with, tho’ subordinate to the Good of others, and the Interest and Advantage of the Publick, must not be admitted at any rate, as a Motive to serve the Publick; but rejected as vicious, ill, unnatural, depraved. And the good, natural, uncorrupt Motive for serving others and the Publick, must be drawn from Affection to others and the Publick only, under the Witness and Inspection of the governing Mind, or Deity; that this gives Denomination of *Virtue*, *Worth*,

|| *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 21.

\* Pag. 25.

*Honesty,*

*Honesty, Integrity, Right, Moral Beauty, Order, Harmony, &c.* And consequently that practising upon the Motive of Self-Advantage, or private Good, must be the reverse. CHAP.  
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“ Now, as to the Belief of a *Deity*, and how Men are influenced by it; we may consider, in the first Place, on what Account Men yield Obedience, and act in Conformity to such a supreme Being. It must be either *in the Way of his Power*, as presupposing some Disadvantage or Benefit to accrue from him: Or *in the Way of his Excellency and Worth*, as thinking it the Perfection of Nature to imitate and resemble him. If (as in the first Case) there be a Belief or Conception of a *Deity* who is consider’d only as *powerful* over his Creatures, and enforcing Obedience to his *absolute Will* by particular Rewards and Punishments; and if on this Account thro’ Hope merely of *Reward*, or Fear of *Punishment*, the Creature be incited to do the Good he hates, or restrain’d from doing the Ill to which he is not otherwise in the least Degree averse; there is in this Case no Virtue, or Goodness whatsoever †.”

AGAIN: “ Nor can this Fear, Hope [of future Punishment, or Reward] *consist* in reality with Virtue, or Goodness; if it either stands as *essential* to any moral Performance, or as a *considerable Motive* to any Act, of which some better Affection ought *alone* to have been a sufficient Cause. It may be consider’d withal, that in this religious sort of Discipline, the

† *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 54, 55.

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“ Principle

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“ Principle of *Self-Love*, which is naturally so prevailing in us, being no way moderated or restrain'd, but rather improv'd and made stronger every Day by the Exercise of the Passions in a Subject of more extended Self-Interest ; there may be Reason to apprehend lest the Temper of this kind should extend itself in general thro' all the Parts of Life. For if the Habit be such as to occasion, in every Particular, a stricter Attention to Self-good and private Interest, it *must insensibly diminish* the Affections towards publick Good, or the Interest of Society ; and introduce a certain Narrowness of Spirit, which (as some pretend) is peculiarly observable in the devout Persons and Zealots of almost every religious Persuasion ||.”

HERE are several Things supposed : That the Deity influences Mens Actions but two Ways, by the Way of Power, or by the Way of Example. Yet afterwards, in order to give the Preference to *Theism* above *Atheism*, he admits of another, the *Inspection* of the supreme Being for producing the *Shame* of Ill-doing, and the *Honour* of Well-doing, in this present Life\*.

THE Deistical Scheme will admit of no higher End of the Deity's being Spectator of human Action : Because the Shame and Honour to be divulged hereafter in Retrospect to past Behaviour here, supposes a solemn Judgment to come, which necessarily moreover supposes *positive legal* Rewards and Punishments (for what Occasion for a Judge to distribute Rewards and Pu-

|| *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 57, 58.\* *Ibid.* pag. 57.

nishments,

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nishments, which, according to them, are and can be no other than the *natural* Consequences of Virtue and Vice? ) And as *positive legal* Rewards and Punishments cannot influence, because they can't be known without Revelation ; as long as they reject this, they can do no less, consistently with themselves, than reject the Influence of the other ; and so confine Shame and Honour resulting from that Inspection to this Scene of Things only : where, I am of Opinion, it will have no Influence upon private Actions, but upon a Supposition of their being brought to Account in the open publick Judgment declar'd by the Gospel.

HE allows of the Influence of the Deity by way of Inspection to the End mentioned ; and also of *Example* in Benevolence and Beneficence, as the only genuine virtuous Spring of Action, as far as the Consideration of Deity has any Share in it : And disallows the Influence of his *Power*, as the Opposite of it. But then he should not have connected to that Consideration, as he does, *Rewards* and *Punishments*. For all the Ideas of them, with respect to their taking place, are relative, not to Power, but to *Justice* : And in order to depreciate the Motives that are virtuously and dutifully drawn from Rewards and Punishments, he places the Deity in a quite different Aspect before those who make use of those Motives, than what they behold him in, who are actually influenc'd by them.

THEY don't at all view him in his Picture of *Power*, exercising an *absolute Will*, or enforcing Obedience by particular Rewards and Punishments. Who but a *Deist* has such an Idea of

CHAP. XVI. God, in his reveal'd Will? No, they look upon his Will, not as absolute, or capricious, but as governing by the *Reason* and according to the *Nature* of Things, as has been shewn †; and that his *particular* Rewards and Punishments flow from his Wisdom and Goodness, and will be duly put in Execution by his Justice. The previous denouncing such Sanctions is a Contradiction to an *arbitrary* Will; because it gives every Body an Opportunity to act so, as to escape any ill Effects from such a Will. Whether there is indeed Virtue and Goodness, which he denies to be in Actions influenc'd by such Motives, will be consider'd in its Place.

He supposes further, that Self-Affection or Regard to private Good in this World, being itself a vicious Motive with Regard to serving the Publick and consulting the Good of others, as he had maintain'd before ‖; so here ‡ the Exercise of that Self-Love improved and made stronger in a Subject of more *extended* Self-Interest, *i. e.* future Reward in another World, spoke of in the Paragraph before, has a Tendency to *diminish* the Affections towards Publick Good or the Interest of Society: And he confirms this by the Example of the *Narrowness* of Spirit observable in devout Persons and Zealots of every Religion. I shall not answer for every devout or zealous Person even of the Christian Religion, because several exert a Zeal without Knowledge where to place it, or Prudence when to use it; and therefore the Fault is wholly in them, if they are found wanting in that, or any Instance of Mora-

† Throughout Vol. I.

‖ *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 25. ‡ *Ibid.* pag. 58.

lity,

lity, and not in the Christian Religion, which CHAP. XVI. inspires the contrary.

To the rest of his Assertions I answer, and hope to make appear both from the Nature of Things, and from the reveal'd Will of God, *That moral Obligation is founded upon Self-Affection or Regard to private Good*, influenced and directed by the *Authority of God as its Basis*. And *that the Practice of Morality is primarily, and most strongly influenc'd from Motives and Considerations of the Good and Happiness of the Agent*.

By SELF-AFFECTION I mean the Affection a Man regularly has, or ought to have for himself, in the *complete* Sense of *Self*. As the main Duration of his Being lies in *Futurity*, his chief Good or Happiness, or Consideration of *Self* must therefore lie there; which he is to love and regard as the ultimate End of his Actions. The Nature and Kind of his Good and Happiness must be according to the Nature and Kind of his Being. If that is complex in the Union of Body and Mind now, it will be more perfect hereafter in the greater Perfection of both of them: If the Mind consists of Faculties suited to the Perception and Enjoyment of Good (suppose Understanding, Will, and Affections) there must be relative Objects suitable to those Faculties both here, and hereafter.

In order to enjoy Happiness here and hereafter, our wise Maker has accordingly constituted us *reasonable, sociable, accountable* or *religious* Creatures. To consider the Relations we stand in, regulate our Affections, distinguish natural Good from moral, true Happiness from

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false,

CHAP. false, short Pleasure or Pain from what is lasting and more concerning, in order to reform and regulate the Election of the Will, and superintend all Action to the ultimate End as *sociable*, made to enjoy our Good not solitarily, but in Society, both in this World and the next; and being made sensible of the same, we are impress'd with natural Love and Affection to *Society*, as well as to our private *Selves*, as we are *Accountable* and *Religious*: We submit our Reason to his who gave us our Being with our Reason, in case he has truly revealed any Directions to our ultimate Happiness, which we could not otherwise have found out; and think ourselves bound to understand, and do his Will, and be affected with the Sanctions he has annex'd thereto.

MAN then being constituted to enjoy his Good or Happiness in Society, his Good, as a sociable intelligent Agent, must be implicated with, and *connected* to the Good of others, intelligent of their Good as we are of ours; our *Mores* or Manners respecting their Good, the Rules and Directions concerning it, in Conjunction with our own, makes it *moral* Good; and others being sensible of that *Communication* with and Respect had to them, gives it the Idea of *Good*.

BUT all that Necessity, Force, Compulsion being set aside, which subvert the Liberty of the Will, and for that Reason are Contraries to Virtue and Morality, the Qualification; and no less so to Happiness itself, which is the End. Since Happiness so much depends upon the Choice of the Will, that if it was forc'd upon, it would infallibly disgust a free Agent: it remains that Virtue and Morality must be the *Choice* of the Will, and

and Pursuit of the Affections, as well as the Discovery of the Understanding. The Query then is, what *obliges* or induces to this moral Good; or, upon what Foundation ultimately, is the OBLIGATION to it laid? and what *fastens* it being laid? and consequently what is it that primarily, and most strongly moves Man to it? The true Answer, I presume, is Self-Affection, or the Regard the Man has to his main Happiness, as his ultimate End. And this will appear whether the Motive is drawn (1.) from Affection to Society or the Publick. Or (2.) from the Reason or Relation of Things. Or (3.) from the Command of God. The Obligation may be consider'd externally, as propounded to the Mind; or internally, as laying hold of the Will, causing its Election, and stimulating to Action.

I. IN case the Motive is taken from Affection to the Publick, or the Good of others. That the Will may not verge the wrong Way, nor Reason be guilty of Oversights thro' the Corruption of Nature, we are provided with *natural Instincts and Affections*, to prompt the Reason and solicit the Will to the doing beneficent, kind, and humane Actions. And where we are the most obliged in the Reason and Relation of Things, there the Affection is the strongest, proportionably to the Nearness of the Relation. So that some Actions of the greatest Consequence to Society are secured by three Laws, and the Performance induced by as many Motives. Parents, for Instance, are obliged *not to be bitter towards their Children* by Instinct, by Reason, and by the Law of God; so, that of *honouring Father and Mother* is founded in all three. The



CHAP. XVI. Affection lessens as the Sphere or Circle enlarges from the nearest to *self*, to the outmost Circle of all, all Mankind, which is still SELF at the farthest Distance; and tho' Man is restrain'd from the commerce of Beneficence by the limitation of Power, yet he is indefeasibly entitled to the Benevolence of the Mind, and to all the good Effects of that, as Opportunity offers. To be defective therefore in, and insensible of the obliging Instincts of Nature in the nearer Spheres within our Power, is a greater Crime than to be defective in the remotest, and such a Violation of the Law of Nature, as to be *worse than an Infidel*; for that is a Transgression of that *Faith of Nature*, which the Heathens for the most part strictly observe. *Charity* the most extensive of all is required to be added to *Brotherly-Kindness*, i. e. the Love of those of the Household of Faith, which is to be added to *Godliness* \* as soon as we enter that Household.

THIS Publick-Affection is not wholly the Gift of Nature; for then every one would be possess'd of it, and where would be the Virtue? But it is a reasonable, religious Improvement upon the Foundation of Nature; and is to be taught, regulated, and conducted to make it a Virtue. The Measure by which it is to be regulated and conducted is *the Love of ourselves*, truly consider'd and understood; that is certainly the first Affection and the strongest Principle in any Agent, expected to shew his Love to the Publick.

EVERY Man is supposed, other Circumstances being equal, to love himself in the highest De-

\* 2 Pet. i. 7.

gree,

gree, preferably to all others, at all times, and therefore not to love himself more at one time than another, but to the End of his Days to carry an Affection to true Self, paramount to that of others. Upon this, mutual Love is grafted, and regulated by it. Upon this Principle human Society, in its present indigent Condition, is tied together by innumerable Ligaments: By as many Conveniencies of Life as the infinite Labour and Contrivance of Man has furnished for the Gratification of Self-Affection, and supplying those Wants which no Man is sufficient to of himself; but are readily furnish'd by mutual Usefulness and corresponding Commerce. And whilst the Self-Affection of one Man is just and honest, civil and complaisant to the Self-Affection of all other Men, he enjoys all the Good of Society.

IN Acts of Beneficence and publick Spirit the Thoughts of Self-Advantage must be discarded, in one Sense; that is, if the Action is done merely, or principally out of a Prospect of Vain-glory, to be talk'd of by Contemporaries, or After-Ages (and who can tell whether the celebrated Deed of *Regulus* had any other Motive?\*) This is an irregular serving ourselves, and not

\* As to any other Pretence of being a Virtue see a few Pages after. *Lactant. de falsa Sapientia*, Lib. III. cap. 26. according to his usual Eloquence, observes of this sort of *false* Virtue, *Ita fit ut nihil aliud ex virtute capietur nisi Gloria. Sed hæc aut supervacua, & brevis est, aut pravis hominum judiciis non sequenda. Nullus igitur ex virtute fructus est, ubi virtus mortalis est, & caduca. Ita qui hæc locuti sunt, umbram quandam virtutis viderunt, ipsam virtutem non viderunt. Desixi enim fuerunt in terram; nec vultus suos erigebant, ut eam possent intueri; quæ sese à cæli regionibus ostendebat.*

the

CHAP. the Publick. Though we should *give all our*  
 XVI. *Goods to the Poor, or lay down our Lives for the*  
*Brethren*, if we have not a real Love for the  
 Poor and conscientiously intend their Good ; or,  
 if we have no *Fidelity* to the Christian Cause,  
 nor design the *Confirmation* of that glorious  
 Faith ; we have no Charity, either to Man, or  
 God ; we serve not the Publick, but our own  
 Vanity altogether.

BUT if we take in the due Consideration of  
 Self-Affection, what we shall be benefitted in this  
 Life or the next ; by loving the Publick and  
 serving it when we are called, to bear some La-  
 bour, Hazard, or Expence ; when we consider that  
 the Enjoyment of our Good and Happiness in  
 Society here runs parallel with the Happiness and  
 Prosperity of that Society : Tho' every Sub-  
 ject has a natural Right, by the Appointment of  
 God, to Happiness in Society, and for that Rea-  
 son every supreme Magistrate is called the *Min-  
 ister of God* to that Subject *for good* ; yet as Pri-  
 vate Good is embark'd in the Ship of Publick  
 Good, every one in Society is bound to pro-  
 mote the Happiness of others as well as him-  
 self, and by doing so has a Claim from the So-  
 ciety, as well as from God, for securing his  
 own ; and consequently forfeits that Right to  
 his own Welfare, by disturbing, or intercepting  
 that of others ; but by consulting both we are  
 laying up a good Foundation moreover against  
 the Time to come, and shall reap hereafter ac-  
 cording to the Plenty or Spare of our sowing  
 here ; what Opportunity should we decline, or  
 Danger flinch from, when we see ourselves like  
 to reap the Advantage of it ? If we have not  
 our Recompence here, we are sure of it here-  
 after,

after, for whatever we may lose, or postpone in CHAP.  
 the various Ways of doing good to others ; see-  
 ing a *Cup of cold Water* shall not miss of its Re-  
 ward. XVI.

THIS is regarding our *Citizenship* as we ought  
 to do, in both Stages of our Being ; here we  
 have no continuing City, living upon bits and  
 crumbs of broken Happiness ; in the immove-  
 able succeeding one is *the* happy Society, when  
 we *shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Ja-  
 cob* to a full Meal of Happiness, where Charity  
 never faileth, thither we are bid to aim, and have  
 our Eye and Conversation principally turn'd to.  
 There is *the* Publick, all good Men are invited  
 to partake in, and therein seek their Advantage  
 for ever. And the more they seek it, the more  
 their Benevolence flows, the more their Endeav-  
 ours flourish for promoting the Good of others  
 here. Those Motives of another World being  
 the appointed Balance against the Exorbitancy  
 of every earthly Passion, to keep it from degene-  
 rating to a Selfishness, inconsistent with the Good  
 of others ; and that lasting regard to self *there*,  
 recovers us to the true Love of ourselves and  
 others here ; preventing the ill Effects and Dis-  
 orders arising from *false* Self-Interest, Ambition,  
 Envy, Avarice, Revenge, Malice, Injustice, Op-  
 pression, Fraud, &c. So far is it from being  
*Selfish, Mercenary, or Servile* to be moved and  
 induced by these Rewards in performing the re-  
 lative Duties of Society, that nothing can begin,  
 or perfect them sooner ; instead of *insensibly di-  
 minishing the Affection towards publick Good or In-  
 terest of Society*, as this Author impeaches, it sen-  
 sibly and most mightily tends to augment and  
 advance it.

BESIDES,

BESIDES, if *true* Self-affection is the Measure and Standard of publick Affection, how should that be vicious, or depraved, or defective, or deserving to be excluded, which is to measure out the Virtue, Proportion and Quantity of the other? For should publick Affection run so high, in voluntary Oblations, as to throw away Life in a mistaken Notion of serving others (no Law of God or Defence of the Community requiring it) it ought to be branded as ridiculous, romantick, nay, as a Crime against the Publick, being in Truth a Violation of that Self-Affection and Preservation whereon the Publick subsists: An Increase of such Instances would be its Ruin, as the Care of every Individual duly preserving *self*, and reserving to commanded Occasions, is its common Preservation. So sacred and personal is Preservation to the Interest and Happiness of SELF, that in *equal* Circumstances, it takes place of regard to all others; and at Years of Discretion is unalienable; as is every Man's private Judgment of the *essential* Means tending to that End.

WHAT is the Publick to any private Person unless his Interest and Good is included so as to enjoy in Partnership with it, contentedly sharing Profit and Loss, according to his Station? The Comforts and Benefits he consults to himself, are proposed only to be enjoy'd in concert with the Good of others, which together with himself make the Whole. Does not the diligent Bee, whilst it is clubbing its particular Industry and Fidelity to its Publick, propose to enjoy in Winter the Fruits of Summer toil, as securely as the best of them? When true Self-advantage

moves

moves and stimulates to Action with this Regulation and Deference, it moves as God, and Nature, and Society would have it, the Man is performing the Condition of his Bond, both to God, and Society; in Spite of what the said Author affirms as above, *No Creature can be considered otherwise [than vicious] when the Passion towards Self-good, though ever so moderate, is his real Motive.* And when it moves in that moderate subordinate Sphere, the more diligent we are in that Pursuit, the truer we are to the Publick, as well as ourselves.

For if the Good of the Publick consists in the aggregate Good of so many Particulars as that Publick consists of, when every one pursues his own Prosperity in Connection with that of others, every one promotes his own and others at the same time; and so doing right to every Man, and himself, takes the right way of promoting the Prosperity of the whole. And when the Love of Self joins, as it always ought, to make it *true* Interest or Love of Self, with the Love of others, the Action is carried on and performed so much the better, with the Increase of a double Power of two Motives, both Social, Rational, and Virtuous. Nor is Self-advantage any Bribe to the Action, because that Consideration is part of the Action, and part of the Virtue; the principal Stake, and the *Primum Mobile*, moving every Man to act what is best for himself, both in his Publick, and Private Capacity.

THE Advancement of Self-happiness is the *ultimate* End; and the sincere Endeavours of every one jointly in his Sphere, to promote the Happiness

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pineness of others, are the *Means* subordinate to it by the Appointment of God. By such *Means* a Man may merit of *Society*; but neither by the *Means*, nor the *End* can he merit of God; because both were his *Duty*; and as *such* will meet with the Approbation of God, himself, and all wise Men.

I CONCLUDE therefore that the Motive or moral Obligation to that sociable Action or Virtue has the *Self-good* and Happiness of the Agent, in its *true* Sense, for its *Basis*. To separate that and expel it out of the Action as excentrick, is to cast a Damp upon publick Good, and put asunder what God and Nature have join'd together. The Prudence and Self-Approbation of the Agent will always be grounded upon a joint Promotion of the Good of each, and in the Neglect of neither. And though the Praise and Esteem of others, whether cotemporary, or in distant Times, respects the Agent only from the Good *others* receive from his Action, yet those Admirers must *suppose* the *other* Consideration to make it *prudent*, and compleat the Glory of it; according to that Maxim, *If thou art Wise, thou shalt be Wise for thyself*, Prov. ix. 12.

No body therefore denies what our Author says when he further explains himself, *Miscellan. Reflect.* \* "That for a Creature whose natural End is Society [he should have said *Happiness* in Society] *to operate as is by Nature* [better, by the God of Nature] *appointed him towards the Good of such his Society, or Whole, is in reality to pursue his own natural and proper*

\* *Charact.* Vol. III. pag. 223.

" Good.

" Good. And that to operate *contrary-wise*, or CHAP.  
" by such Affections as sever from that com- XVI.  
" mon Good, or publick Interest, is in reality,  
" *to work towards his own natural and proper*  
" *Ill.*"

AND thus with respect to *Publick Spirit*, and *Generosity*, every Person, in every Station of Life, may perform Heroick Actions, according to his Sphere; or in the Words of an ingenious Writer †, "No external Circumstances of Fortune, no involuntary Disadvantages, can exclude any Mortal from the *most heroick Virtue*. For how small soever the *Moment* of *publick Good* be, which any one can accomplish, yet if his *Abilities* are proportionably small, the *Quotient*, which expresses the Degree of *Virtue*, may be as great as any whatsoever. Thus not only the *Prince*, the *Statesman*, the *General*, are capable of *true Heroism*, tho' these are the chief Characters, whose Fame is diffused through various Nations and Ages; but when we find in an *honest Trader*, the kind *Friend*, the *faithful prudent Adviser*, the *charitable and hospitable Neighbour*, the *tender Husband* and *affectionate Parent*, the *sedate yet chearful Companion*, the *generous Assistant* of *Merit*, the *cautious Allayer* of *Contention* and *Debate*, the *Promoter* of *Love* and *good Understanding* among Acquaintances; if we consider, that these were *all* the good Offices which his Station in the World gave him an Opportunity of performing to Mankind, we must judge *this Character* really as *amiable*, as those,

† *Inquiry concerning moral Good and Evil*, by Hutcheson, pag. 194.

" whose



CHAP. XVI. "whose external Splendor dazzles an injudicious World into an Opinion *that they are the only Heroes in Virtue.*"

BUT publick Spirit or Love of Country in *Governors* and *Rulers* of Society, besides Care at home, has a larger Extent of Conscience and Sphere of Duty with regard to *other Countries* (and almost all other Countries, by Navigation, are Neighbours to a *maritime Power.*) For as their private Kingdom is but as one Individual in respect to all others; so, when no Injury is offer'd, mediately or immediately, none ought to be done purely to the Advantage or Extent of *Empire* of that particular Kingdom; that being a vicious Self-love, a kind of Piety to Country that is really impious, being a Sin against *universal* Benevolence, the publick Spirit or Humanity due to the Rights of *all Men*, and consequently such a Love of Country like the *Romans*\*, and lately the *grand Monarch*, which gloried in the Conquest of innocent Neighbours, was as unfit to be recommended by the Gospel, as *Piracy*, or *Robbery*. The *Romans* terminated their Virtues to this World, and whilst they were severally free Agents incorporating themselves to that End, they became Instruments in the Hand of Providence for mighty Purposes, in taking Provinces of the World from others and giving to them; that being their View and their Heaven to enlarge the Bounds of Empire, to enjoy their own Liberty, and take away that of other People. The Virtues subservient to that End were *Roman* Virtues, full of Renown. And so long

\* Quæ omnia non utique Virtutes, sed Virtutum sunt everfiones. Vid. *Lat. Lib. VI. cap. 6.*

as they practised them *more Majorum*, as a Law and Fashion of a *Roman*, *i. e.* with a Thirst of publick Glory, join'd to a Contempt of private Wealth and Luxury, they increased in Empire; kept that, and Liberty\*: But as fast as Corruption enter'd, lost both with the same Pace, they advanced in each. But the Virtue of *Great Britain* and its *Rulers* is much more glorious in placing itself in the reverse; who, having it in their Power, according to that certain Maxim of *Tully*, *Qui mare tenet, eum necesse est RERUM potiri*, (And is there any other Empire upon this Globe so large as the Ocean? Or so fitted to hold the *Balance* of at least *Europe*, *Africa*, and *America*?) Yet religiously abstain from encroaching upon any of the Rights and Liberties of any of their Neighbours; placing the very Honour and Conscience of their Dominion, in preserving the Peace, and preventing any dangerous Encroachment, one upon another, among neighbouring and respectful Nations.

It is commonly said, that *Compassion*, *Gratitude*, *Friendship*, are disinterested, and have not their Motives from Self-advantage; which is true in a comparative Sense; that there is *less* Consideration of immediate Self in them, than in other sociable Efforts: But still *Self* moves in each of them, and not at all to their Disparagement. These Benevolences are originally founded in Instinct, or that Affection to Society planted in us, as their Source; and are cultivated by Reason and Consideration: For as much as some

\* Patriæ rem unusquisque, non suam, augeri properabat, pauperque in divite, quam dives in paupere imperio versari malebat. *Val. Max. Lib. IV. cap. 4.*

CHAP. XVI. Persons degenerated from Humanity and Reason are found void of them. Notwithstanding these Instincts and Affections for Society are as necessary to solicit Reason to do good to the Publick, as Hunger, and Thirst, and Weariness, are essential to put Reason, otherwise forgetful, in mind of providing for the Nourishment and Support of the Individual.

THE first very naturally and instantaneously shoots up from the universal Root of Instinct, for rescuing from those Evils our common Nature is liable to; nor can any refuse it to a proper Object, but such as are lost to Humanity. The assisting such unhappy Objects is so far from opposing Self-affection, that it is an actual relief to its Commotions; a probable Security moreover of the like Usage under our Misfortunes; and without doubt a *well-pleasing Sacrifice* of Thanksgiving to God, that we have hitherto escaped.

GRATITUDE has its Foundation likewise in Nature, and in such a vehement Attraction to Benevolence, and reciprocal Returns to the Benefactor, according to our Ability; and so strong an Impulse upon the Will, that it is in a manner irresistible; if any thing can be said to *constrain* and compel it, it is that, and that is said of the *Love of Christ* conferr'd upon Man. And are not those Returns both in Nature, and Grace, the most generative and productive of fresh Benefits? and can *Self* forget that?

FRIENDSHIP is very often grounded in a natural Affinity and Cognation of Souls, from a perceiv'd Similitude of Manners and Dispositions:

tions: We cannot chuse the Nearness of our Blood, whilst an Union as near, and dear, and faithful, is frequently chosen; and that lives and subsists upon mutual Kindnesses and a Reciprocation of good Offices, which supposes *Self* on both sides. But what an incoherent recoiling Objection does *Characteristicks* bring against *Christianity*, because it does not expressly allot extraordinary Reward hereafter for extraordinary Friendship between two particular Persons here? Does not that restrain and confine his own boasted Benevolence, which he makes so generally obligatory? And can he consistently declare that to be so particularly rewardable, which is a manifest and sometimes vicious Limitation of, and Exception to his own Principle? It is a sign he was hard put to it for Objections, when he makes use of such. Do not those Friendships mutually reward themselves, when *that peculiar Relation* happens to be *form'd by a Consent and Harmony of Minds, mutual Esteem, and reciprocal Tendernefs and Affection*, by blazoning Fame and making two Heroes? Does Christianity, which in all things improves Nature, forbid it? Does it not leave Nature to its own Attraction in *Similitudes*, when they happen to concur? And are there not accordingly Instances of such *particular dear* Friendship among Christians; whilst that Religion nobly *enlarges* the Affection, and would bring all Mankind into the Sphere of its Attraction? And is not the Instance of the greatest Friend to Mankind our *Saviour's dying for Enemies*, illustrated from that very *Exception* he brings against the Apostle? *Rom. v. 7.* \*

\* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 102.

DID not their very Enemies, with great Admiration, give that Character of the primitive Christians, *See how they love one another*? And does not *Simplicius*, who has wrote so very well upon Friendship, declare, "That a few Instances would be some Comfort in this miserable Age; when the Vices and Vileness of Mankind seem to have banished it almost quite out of the World: \*" Consequently, that *six or seven Pair of Friends* in so many Ages are mention'd as an extraordinary Thing. Whereas it was so common and so much better enlarg'd among Christians, it has scarce been thought worth mentioning.

So much, in all these Respects, is private Good and Advantage affianc'd with, and connected to the Good we do unto others.

II. SUPPOSE the Motive drawn from the *Relation*, and *Reasonableness* of Things. This in some Respect coincides with the former. In one, the Agent is consider'd as he stands *affected*, in the other, as he is *related* to Society. But this takes in the *Fitness* and *Congruity* of the Action, and derives the Motive and Obligation upon the Agent from the Consideration of his being so and so station'd and circumstanced in Life, equally excluding, with the former, Self-Advantage or Happiness as a faulty Principle. This is true, like the former, but not the whole Truth of the Case, that gives Force to the Motive, Spring to the Action, and a Tie to the Obligation, according to the STANDARD of Nature.

\* *Com. on Epist. Chap. xxxvii.*

FOR

FOR what is *Fitness* and *Congruity* as applied to Action, but a *relative* Name and Consideration of that Action, as it has a Tendency, and is adapted to some End and Purpose? All Action has some End, and every Agent is supposed to propose that in the *first* Place, as his Mark, to give a Scope and View to what he is doing. *Fitness* then must be in the Nature of a *Means* to attain, or a *Qualification* to enjoy that End.

Now the End is actually fix'd and stated by the WILL of God, who is likewise supposed to have proposed it, as the Scope of his Works and the Purpose of his Acting. The End being fix'd, the Means and Qualifications respecting that End are likewise fix'd, and connected together inseparably in the Nature of Things he has made; nor can any Agent make any Alteration either in the End, or the Means. If therefore he chuses and designs the End, he is necessarily and invariably *obliged* to chuse and pursue the Means in order to it.

TO have *Respect* unto the Recompence of Reward, is to consider the ultimate End of our Actions, and intend the Glory, Fruition, or Vision of God; and if the Virtue of *Righteousness* and *true Holiness*, or *Holiness of Truth*, Eph. iv. 24. is the preparative Qualification and improveable Image of God for that Enjoyment, that End must be the supreme Measure and Obligation of all our moral Actions; as the Conformity of our particular subordinate Actions to the several Laws and Rules of Virtue (all being so many Directions and Cautions to that End) constitutes their particular and special Morality.

F 3

THAT

THAT *Reference* to the End therefore seems to be the Standard to the Agent, both of the *Reasonableness*, and Morality of his Action: And not the *Agreement* of his Action to the Relation or Circumstance he is plac'd in. That indeed founds the Reason of *relative* Duties; but what makes those Duties *moral* is the *Fitness* and Reference of them, *chosen* as such, to the End God appointed them, Happiness. The bare Knowledge and Apprehension of the Relation of Things does not induce the Agent to act, unless the said *End* of Happiness to himself, and others, is proposed from his acting according to that Relation. And when the Action has attain'd that End, or truly intended it, it is morally good; and is, at the same time, a Conformity to the *supreme Reason*, which has appointed those best Actions to those best Ends: And the divine Will and Commandments are so many Directions of our Actions to the Happiness of ourselves and others, in both Worlds.

WHAT other, or what better End could the Fountain of all Self-goodness and Happiness propose, in making Man, than to communicate *Happiness* to him, according to the Nature and Faculties he had given him? The very *Glory* of Goodness consists in *communicating* itself, nor could it otherwise ever have been known. Man then being made a *free* Agent, and a *sociable* Creature; to make his Happiness consistent with, and suitable to his Nature, it must be the Result of his *Choice*; and enjoyable also in *Society*: Imperfectly enjoyable in this Life, more compleatly in the next. And what wiser or better Choice can he possibly make, than of that End

End and that Happiness which his Maker has *chosen* for him, and laid before him for his Acceptance or Refusal? But what greater Enforcement of, or Obligation to his Good, can be laid upon him, for determining and obliging his Will to Acceptance, than such a *Choice* laid before him?

BE there never so many different Opinions about Happiness (as what it is in the present Life, where it is necessarily mix'd and imperfect, there must ever be different Sentiments, and as many Judgments as Tastes of Pleasure, and but one *Truth* to unite in, *viz.* that Happiness which is subordinate and leads to the total or *ultimate* Happiness hereafter) if the Author of our Being and Faculties, who best knows what is best for us in both Worlds, has shew'd us our Good and Happiness in each, all Believers of his Revelation must subscribe to his Truths and Rules concerning it: And all others will for ever be at a Loss without it.

IF Happiness then is the natural, ultimate End of Man, and that End is *chosen*, that governs and *obliges* to the Choice of the Means; and the Reference to and Consideration of the End must be the Motive in chusing and pursuing the Means: the Means will accordingly be chosen not so much for their own Sake, as for the Sake of the End. And as God, the Patron of our *particular* Happiness, and of *Society*, or *general* Happiness, has tied and connected such and such Actions in Society to general, and particular Happiness in it here, and hereafter; and that Happiness depends upon the Performance of such Actions by natural Consequence, or by



CHAP. his Appointment ; then the Performance of them  
XVI. is a *necessary* Means or Qualification for the End ;  
and in Regard to that, the Agent is induced and  
obliged to observe and do them, because he can't  
obtain his End without it.

AND because *necessary* to attain that End, that  
shews the *Fitness*, *Congruity*, *Reasonableness*, *Order*,  
and *Beauty* of the Action ; as Beauty consists in a due  
*Proportion* of the Means to the End, and likewise the  
Agreement of the Action to such a *Relation* or Circumstance  
of Life. If the Action had not been necessary to the End,  
it had neither been beautiful, nor orderly, nor reasonable,  
nor fit : But as it is indispensably necessary, that  
renders it *fit* to be done, because it so exactly *fits* the  
End ; *reasonable*, because it would be absurd to think of  
the End without it ; *orderly* as subordinate ; *beautiful*,  
as proportion'd to it.

TAKE away Happiness, the End to which it tends,  
it produces nothing : What then becomes of those fine  
Characters *Fitness*, *Reasonableness*, &c. Do they reside  
in the Means without the End ? Then the Action is fit  
and reasonable, *because* it is fit and reasonable, &c. *i. e.*  
for no Reason ; if no End is applied, no Reason is  
offer'd, no Instance alledg'd of its *Fitness* ; what is  
this but a speculative resting in the Means without the  
End, and a Recommendation of them without any  
Respect unto it ? The Obligation therefore, or  
Inducement to the Action, does not derive from dry  
*Truth*, *Relation* of the Agent, *Fitness* ; but in  
*relative Truth*, called *Holiness of Truth*, Eph. iv. 24.  
as it is in the Margin ; Holy Manners are expected  
from holy Faith,

Faith, as a pure Effect is from a pure Cause, CHAP.  
that one should enlighten and enliven the other before  
Men. *Fitness*, as it agrees with and is suited to the  
End, makes the Means to be embraced, and pursued  
into Action. XVI.

GOD has made the Relation and Tendency between  
the Means and the End ; and therefore commanded  
*moral* Good because it is naturally good, tends to,  
and qualifies for Happiness : And has prohibited  
*moral* Evil as it leads to Misery ; and as Misery and  
Happiness are *essentially* different, so there is an  
*essential Difference* between the other. And those  
natural and immutable Tendencies, make the natural  
and immutable Law of pursuing the one, and avoiding  
the other. The Agent therefore *chusing* the Action  
not as an End, but a Means in Reference to Happiness,  
makes the *moral* Good ; he co-operates with God in  
*chusing* the same End with him, and *chusing* and  
adapting the same Means. His *Mores* to God, and  
Society, are regulated as they ought to be, and  
therefore his Action is *morally* Good. The Action  
of *itself* is a natural Good productive of natural  
Happiness ; but as it is *chosen* for the Sake of the  
Happiness, it becomes a *moral* Good, productive of  
Happiness suitable to, and *chosen* by a moral Agent.  
The Tie of the Obligation is fasten'd from the  
End, to the *Choice* of the Agent's Will, moving to  
and embracing the Means in respect to the End,  
whether the Obligation is consider'd with some  
*externally*, as proceeding from the Law or Command  
of those that require the Action ; or *internally*  
with others, as inherent in the Agent.

WHY

WHY then should that be last, or least in the Action, which God and Nature has made first and greatest in it; first in the Intention, and greatest in the Execution? *He that duly considers the End will never do amiss.* The proposing the external Motives of Happiness or Misery, Life or Death, is setting the End of the Action before the Agent, that he may conduct himself accordingly.

OR, if the Action is consider'd as a *Qualification* for enjoying the End, Happiness; which Qualification is as necessary in the Nature of Things, as *Taste* is to a Palate: That introduces the *moral Taste*, which seems to be a Tasting our own Happiness in Society, and at the same Time tasting the Happiness of Society.

IT remains therefore that Happiness is the Estimate and *Criterion* of the *moral Taste*, *Fitness*, *Relation*, *Truth*\*, *Beauty*, *Goodness*, *Obligation*, *Approbation*, *Reasonableness*. And consequently

\* Happiness as an End is the Choice of the Will, and that End must have Means suitable to it; and those Means being fix'd, and immoveably settled by the God of our Nature in the Respects or Relations of Persons to Persons, or Persons to Things, in their Circumstances, as his Providence orders them, that makes the *Truth of Things*: Which the Author of the *Religion of Nature delin.* has made the Foundation of his valuable Book. Tho' in making Morality consist in respecting Truth, as *Truth*, he plainly carries the Matter too far. Because all Truth as *such* being equal, all Truth would be *equally* important; and every Action regarding any sort of Truth would be *moral*; and no *Difference* in moral Actions. It must therefore be those Truths, which one way or other respect the Good and Happiness of ourselves, or others, that concern a *moral Agent*, or can come under a *moral Consideration*,

quently that the Dispute has been about Words, CHAP.  
which receive their full and ultimate Meaning XVI.  
from the other; and are all reconciled in it.

WHAT is *Publick-Affection* but multiplying the Love of *Self*, by the Rule and Order of *Citizenship* in both Worlds?

WHAT is the *moral Taste*, but that Hunger and Thirst in our Nature after Happiness; directed to *Righteousness*, in order to accomplish it, and be satisfied?

WHAT

consideration, as Means to that End; if they offer *true* Means to that End, they cure Ignorance and Mistake; but it is the Office of the Understanding to distinguish of that as its proper Object. The Understanding is the mental Eye of the Agent to see his Way to the End: But it is not the Eye that moves the Feet to walk in the Way, but *the Will*; Self-motion springs from that, and that is the *only moral Agent* in the Man, and when it chuses an Action or Means to that End, it becomes moral.

He says, pag. 52, the truest Definition of Natural Religion is, *The Pursuit of Happiness by the Practice of Reason and Truth*. It is plain then, that he very rightly makes Happiness the End of his Truth: But the *Practice of Reason and Truth* seems a very inaccurate Expression; had he said chusing *true* Means by the Discernment of *Reason*, and putting them in *practice* to that End, he would have made his Truth both eligible and practicable, and so brought it into Morality. His System of Truth is vastly beholden to Revelation, tho' unacknowledg'd, and made all to proceed from a *mere Philosopher*: But what Philosopher before the Appearance of the Gospel ever taught some of those Truths, or put any of them in such a Light as they appear in that Book?

However the Deists have no Reason, as I doubt some of them think they have, to plume themselves upon it; for they can find no Arguments there to *contradict* Revelation; but they may please to read their own Condemnation in these Words of the Author. "Here I begin to be very sensible  
" how

WHAT is the Faculty of *Reason* given for, but to find out Truth, and the Relation of Things, and Persons, as they *affect* and *concern* our Happiness? Speculative Truth, and Relation \* may serve for Contemplation, and entertain the Faculty hereafter, when it is more at leisure. But now is the Scene of Action, Probation, and Distinction of the Ways and Means which lead to our End. Tho' it shews the *Will* the *Reasonableness* of the Action never so clearly from Truth and the Relation of Things, it only clears the Eye-sight of *video meliora proboq*; the Judgment is often convinc'd, and the Man no Convert. But the Will is guided most in its Choice by the Motive, and gain'd by the Consideration of Advantage and *Happiness*; and that, which is *eternal*, is adapted to influence most, and *prefer* that Choice as most reasonable, which makes it an Agent to the *best* Purpose.

" how much I want a *Guide*. But as the *Religion* of *Nature* is my Theme, I must at present content myself with that Light which *Nature* affords; my Business being, as it seems, only to shew what a Heathen *Philosopher* without any other help, and almost *avrois duxer*, may be supposed to think. I hope that neither the doing this, nor any thing else contain'd in this *Delineation* can be the least Prejudice to any other *true Religion*. Whatever is immediately *reveal'd* from *God*, must, as well as any Thing else, be treated as being *what it is*; which cannot be, if it is not treated with the highest Regard, *believed* and *obey'd*. That therefore which has been so much insisted on by me, and is as it were the Burden of my Song, is so far from *undermining* true *reveal'd Religion*, that it rather paves the Way for its Reception." pag. 211.

\* See the present *Dean of Christ-Church's* Answer to *Christianity as old, &c.* pag. 245.

So

So high as you can lay the *Supposition* or Design of fixing such an End, and constituting such a Society, or System, so high you may place the Relation, Fitness and Obligation: One will be immutable and eternal in the same Sense the other is. But the *actual Commencement* of the Relation, Fitness, and Obligation, can be no older than the first beginning of such a System, or Society; being no more in Fact and Reality than the *Consequence* of the actual Existence of such Beings.

IF the WILL of God is the Measure of his Power in giving Existence to such a System, and likewise of his Goodness in communicating Happiness, and fixing that for the End; which must be granted, unless you affirm he is a *necessary*, not a *free* Agent with respect to the Effects either of his Power, or Goodness; and if the End was *fix'd* by his *Will*, and that End is Happiness, then all Notion of *Arbitrariness* is shut out from his Will.

AND as the End determines the Means, and he could not will any Means inconsistent with the End that he had willed, then the moral Virtues proceed likewise from, and are *fix'd* by his *Will*, as well as the End. Then the moral Reason, Relation, and Fitness of Things seem to depend upon his *Will*, and not his Will upon them for its Determination; seeing they receiv'd their consequent Being, Existence, and Constitution, from the previous Determination of that Will. Wisdom and Power being eternally attendant upon that Will when it has a Mind to act; ever knowing what is best, secures the ever willing

CHAP. willing what is best ; ever willing what is best  
XVI. establishes eternal Holiness, out of which arises  
eternal Goodness and Justice ; out of them arise  
his Commands, which are holy, just and good.

CONCERNING those other Perfections, the Exercise whereof “ depends upon his [God’s] “ *Will* ; such are his Justice, Veracity, Goodness, Mercy, and all other *moral* Perfections ; the absolute Immutability of *these* is not indeed so obvious and self-evident ; because it depends on the Unchangeableness, not only of his *Essence*, but of his *Will* also. Nevertheless, upon careful Consideration, the Unchangeableness of *these* likewise will no less certainly appear : Because in a Being who always knows what is right to be done, and can never possibly be deceiv’d, or aw’d, or tempted, or imposed upon ; his general *Will* or *Intention*, of doing always what is best and most fit and right, will in Reality, though not upon the same Ground of natural *Necessity*, yet in Event, and upon the whole, be as *certainly and truly unchangeable*, as his very *Essence* itself—With the Father of Lights, there is no Variableness nor Shadow of Turning.\*” The supreme Perfection is the Measure of all Things : *Rectum est index sui & obliqui*.

AND if that is the *Rectitude* of the divine Will to be ever steady to Good, and determin’d to that which is *best in the whole*, in the Constitution of Things he has willed ; the *moral* Attributes seem to flow from that, as their Fountain ; his essential Holiness is his essential, yet

\* Dr. Clark’s *Posthumous Sermon*. Vol. I. pag. 147, 148.

free

free Adherence to Good. For whatever is *moral* CHAP. in God, or Man, must have *Will* and *Choice* for its Root and Origin. The Choice or Energy of the Will, the universal Principle of moral Action, authenticates the Action, and denominates it moral ; chusing, God leading the Way to shew what is, and is not Good, what he marks, distinguishes, and directs to be so, and avoiding what he disapproves and forbids, so that Will to Good is the same in kind in God, in Angels and in Men, tho’ they differ in Degree, *i. e.* in Adherence to Good. Man’s Degree is to be Followers of God as dear Children : — Rom. xii. 4. *Abhorring that which is Evil, cleaving to that which is Good*, suitable to his diminutive Human Capacity, And as the whole of Morality seems to be a System of *practical* Means and Ends, graduated into several intermediate Ends, and all subordinate to the ultimate End ; the Rule of Morality, *Good* and *Evil*, *Right* and *Wrong*, *Fitness* and *Unfitness*, seems to be fix’d in the fix’d Respect of the Means to the End ; intended, chosen, and put in practice for the Sake of the Ends that are intermediate, and that which is ultimate. And the *Gradation* of Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, &c. will arise, as the Means affect it, *i. e.* promote, or hinder the mediate, or ultimate End : The last being the greatest Concern to the Agent. And the *Distinction* of Good and Evil, &c. will consist and be fix’d in the fix’d Suitableness or Agreement, Disagreement or Contrariety, of the Means to the respective Ends. And that Distinction will be as *durable*, and *immutable*, as the Will of God has actually fix’d the ultimate End and Enjoyment of Happiness in another World, and the subordinate End or Taste of it in this, for every Member



CHAP. XVI. Member of Society; and *immutably* connected the Means to the Ends. And as God *governs* by the Truth and Righteousness of that Rule, and by the Improvements made to it by his reveal'd Will; that Rule, with the Improvements, where discover'd, is a fix'd Law both to God, and Man. And consequently Righteousness, Truth, Love of Virtue, and Hatred of Sin, &c. in the Proceedings of Men, will be of the *same kind* in the Proceedings of God, but of a larger Compass.

COMMANDS therefore resulting from his Will being always so laid in the Nature and Relations of Things, as to consult the best, *i. e.* Happiness of the moral Agent, he governs according to his free Choice of Happiness; it is much the same Thing to say, the Thing commanded is finally holy, just, and good to that Creature, because he commands it, as to say because it is holy, just and good in its own Nature to that Creature, therefore he commands it. Since the *Fitness* of Things does not exist before the *Will* of God, to dispute whether the Fitness of Things, or the Will of God obliges, is a Dispute only of Words. The Goodness of Things consists in their Fitness for answering the Ends they were appointed to; the Goodness and Virtue of Agents in this World appear in regulating their Actions in Conformity to the Will of God, which has chosen and fitted such and such Actions to the final Happiness he has constituted Man to; and to consult that in his moral Conduct, is the same Thing as to consult the Glory of God, or the Glory of such an Appointment. Such a moral Fitness of the Means relative to his own Happiness, the End accord-

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ing to the Will of God, is the Rule or Law CHAP. XVI. of his Action, and of his Obligation. And so every Sin against God and our Neighbour is a Sin also against a Man's self, being a Transgression of that Law, which is a Direction to his own Happiness. In the last Place,

III. SUPPOSE the Motive drawn from the *Command* of God. But he knows our Nature too well to give forth Laws and Commandments without annexing *Sanctions* to them. He knows he has no Authority over the free Choice and elective Faculty of Man in Comparison of what those Sanctions give him. Had he ordain'd us for Misery, we could have no Respect or Obligation at all to him: But as he propounds *Happiness*, as well as Misery, to our *Choice*, at the Option of our own Behaviour; and has done so very much to secure and increase Man's Happiness, when he first prevaricated with it, that *obliges* us indeed to him.

AND as our Happiness is complex with respect to both Parts of our Constitution, and in both Stages of its Duration; what it misses in one, to be compensated in another; *he* only can lay the *complete Motive*, and the lasting Obligation before us, to induce us *paramount* to all others, at all Times, and in all Places, to observe his Will. In doing that, we secure the divine Favour, which includes a Security of our Happiness in both Parts of our Nature, and in all its Faculties. And as the Commands of God are Directions and Qualifications for our Happiness, by connecting that Means to that End, what can possibly be wiser, or more prevailing upon a free Agent, than to affix that

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Sanc-

CHAP. XVI. Sanction to the Command, as a Reward of the Action, which is the ultimate End of it; and so bringing the End of the Action before the Agent, direct his Choice, and *oblige*, and induce him more powerfully to it?

THE truest Method of investigating any Law whatsoever is, first to enquire the End of the Law, and then the Means of performing and fulfilling it. What can animate Man more to be chearful in doing all the Good he can to his Fellow-Creatures, than the Consideration of the greater Good he shall lay up and receive for so doing? And that the very Means of attaining Happiness above, is the communicating Happiness here below? Or what can better reduce all the selfish Affections, the Authors of so many sublunary Mischiefs, into due Order and Subordination to the *general* Good, than the Certainty of losing a greater Interest hereafter for the sake of attaining a less, and so much the less as being a repented, molested, or envied Good here? Universal Happiness is God's End and View in the Creation and Redemption of the World; and as that Whole consists of so many Individuals, when every one pursues future Felicity by the Means in his own Power, which are so many providential Directions to every Man (that of contributing to the Happiness of others, being one amongst the rest) he concurs with God's Design, and not only prays, but contributes to his *Kingdom coming* daily to Perfection, *coming* where it has not yet enter'd; and where it has, *coming* daily to greater Perfection of Rule over us.

AND as he never reaps but where he has sown, and according to what he has sown; and has made

made Virtue natural to our *Reason*, to our *Affection* to Society, and also to our Desires of Happiness in this World, and the next: In exciting to the Practice of it, he makes use of Motives sometimes from one, sometimes from the other, but all terminating in the Interest and Advantage of the Agent here, and hereafter.

WHEN he addresses to Reason, he expostulates with, and adjures that, to *consider* our Ways, *ponder* the Path of our Feet, whither they are tending, and what will be the Consequence of our Doings. *Consideration* being the actual opening the *Eye* of the Mind within us; earnestly directing its Thoughts, which are its mental Sight of the *Invisible*, yet incomparably more importing Man, than all the visible Things that surround him. Thus the *Faith* of *Abraham* in his Life of religious Consideration *saw* the Day of Christ, and was glad. He appeals to the Sentiments of Equity, Justice, Right and Wrong, Good and Evil, which immediately and intimately spring up in our Reason, upon the least Consideration of Society and its several Relations, as an innate Law, as so many conscious Maxims and known Truths previous to his Revelation, to try the Equity of his reveal'd Will, and to compare and measure their own Ways by the same. And as the End is intentionally known before the Means, that gives *Conscience* the Province of approving, or disapproving; as the Action has a Tendency to advance, or obstruct our Happiness. We have a Conscience or Perception likewise wrought in us for publick Good; that *Total*, of which we make one, and whose Interest, in most Respects, is one with ours; that gives the Sense of Honour or Praise,

CHAP. Shame or Reproach, as our Actions have benefited or prejudic'd, help'd or harm'd that.

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THAT Love to Society implanted in us, the great Patron and Protector of it would not have withdrawn, but still continued to our personal *Enemies*, because they are yet still of the same Society with us; leaving the Vengeance or Redress of every tolerable Wrong, consistent with the Being of Society, to himself: That we ought to imitate the great Father of it, being in that like Children to their Father; and, co-operating with his Providence, according to our Sphere, bestow our *general* Good, Kindness, and Benevolence, and not limit it, nor pass over the Opportunity he has given us, because the Object has been once an Enemy, lest a cancelled Obligation return upon us; considering ourselves how much we receive from, and yet how often we offend God. And why are we commanded to *imitate* him, the Head of the Society, in that Particular, but because our Happiness in Society consists in, and is improved by it? Thus the *Love of Enemies*, being one Branch and Particular of the universal Law of Benevolence, is the Law of our Nature, and the necessary redintegration of Society; and therefore is so strictly enjoin'd, enforc'd, and inserted into daily Prayer by Christianity, which is the Perfecter of every thing that is good in this World, and the next. And therefore the Deistical Ridicule of this Duty is a standing Monument against them, as well of the Shallowness of their Heads, as of the Badness of their Hearts, with respect to Society, and Human Nature. And why is that Publick good, the *Conversion of a Sinner*, such great Sinners against God and the Publick, from  
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the Error of their Ways, so much recommended, CHAP. but for the sake of that increase of Happiness XVI.  
it brings to Society, and to the Converter?

IN doing good to others, the Example of God and Christ are proposed, and likewise the laying up a good Foundation against the Time to come, and reaping plentifully, that the Christian may be moved by one, or both of them, as he is disposed. Some Virtues and Duties are propos'd and press'd, sometimes upon a Temporal Advantage, at other times upon an Eternal. And so the Scripture becomes all Things to all Men, that it may gain some by all, as they are dispos'd to be gain'd by any, Means.

WHY are we bid to love God *with all our Heart, with all our Soul*, &c. but because that Love, as it adds nothing to God (did it add any Thing we should be superior to him) *re-acts* upon ourselves, by an Expansion of ourselves towards him in an Unity of Will; and, raising the Love of our own Happiness in him, throws off the false, and fixes the true Love of ourselves and our own Good, where it ought to be. That Love does not cast out the Love of ourselves, but encourages it as its Foundation; when it is perfect, it casteth out Fear; and so increases the Love more and more: And as we know it consults our Interest, we resign ourselves to him in a great Measure, without so much as thinking of that, in Confidence of his taking care of it.

BUT, when we have erred and strayed very much from him, nothing but a State of Danger,

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or

CHAP. or the Consideration of the neglected Motives  
XVI. of Rewards and Punishments, which lay hold  
of the strongest Principle within us, SELF-  
PRESERVATION, can recover us: The general Excellency of Virtue, and the Turpitude of Vice are weak and incompetent Topicks in such a Case; but when the Eye of the Mind is open'd by Consideration, to see the several Ends they lead to; then the Excellency of the one, and Turpitude of the other, is sensibly and completely perceiv'd.

For what is the Excellency of Virtue; it must be excellent for something, and what is that, but as it is the best Accommodation and indispensable Provision for our Happiness in both Worlds? And what is the Turpitude of the other, but as it deceives and betrays us into Misery in both? And what is Folly but the Sense of a wrong Choice, and false Pursuit, for which we hate and loath ourselves into Repentance, and true Love of ourselves; for being so unwise as to love every Thing, and every Person better than self; for being so very thoughtless as to endeavour to monopolize Vice, by railing according to the common Mode, at the Practice of that in other People, which they pamper and indulge in themselves. What is Repentance but a Retraction of a wrong Choice of Happiness exchanged for a better? And what is Wisdom but the Sense of the Necessity of practising Virtue, and actually setting about it? Then we understand the Meaning of the Word *ought* to Fear, and serve God; when our Happiness, or Misery depend upon our Care, or Neglect in doing it. *For the Fear of the Lord is all Wisdom, and in all Wisdom is the performance of the Law,*  
and

and the knowledge of his Omnipotency, Ecclus. CHAP.  
xix. 20. XVI.

ALL the Passions are subservient to the determin'd Choice of the Will; being every one of them so many Modifications and Efforts of itself towards its Object, or its Good or Happiness (be it chose right and wisely, or wrong and foolishly) whether in the concupiscible, or irascible Kind. The *Greeks* rightly name it τὸ ἐνεμονικὸν or τὸ αὐτεξέσιον. For it governs all the Powers of the Agent with an Imperial Authority; they wait accordingly at its *Levee* and receive Orders, and change their Objects, as the other changes its Object, or its Notion of Happiness. The Election of the Will having fix'd its Object as its Good or Happiness, the Adhesion of that Faculty to that Object is its *Love*, and the Avoidance of the contrary Evil its *Aversion* or *Hatred*: And as that Adhesion of Will or Love of the Object is a King of our own chusing, no wonder we are so willing to obey its Laws. If the Good or Evil is present, Love and Hatred is modified into Complacency or Joy, or Grief and Anger: If future, into Desire and Hope, or Fear and Caution. So that the Person who loves any of the Things of this World supremely, has a different Happiness and a wrong Object of all his Passions, in respect to him who supremely loves God and Goodness; which verifies that Maxim, *If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.* In the State of Innocence the Passions were subject to the Understanding or discerning Faculty of the Soul, but, upon Transgression and wrong Choice, went over to the Government of the Will or chusing Faculty of the Mind, and under



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der that Obedience have continued ever since. Nor is there any possible Way of governing them to any Effect, or setting them to tolerable Rights, but by rectifying the Election of the other. For this reason *Love* is directed to abound more and more in Knowledge, and in all Judgment, that we may approve things that are excellent, that we may be sincere and without offence, Phil. i. 9, 10. When the right End is pitch'd upon, the Leader Love, and under that all the rest, fall into Order, and Subordination; and then all the Commandments respecting God, or our Neighbour, are perceivably summ'd up and practis'd in the Love of each of them; whilst the true Love of Self is the Foundation of them both.

As Love is the supreme governing Passion, nothing is, or ought to be its chief, most prefer'd, constantly adhered to Object, but what is its supreme End, viz. God, and Happiness in his Favour; and if *Charity*, for the greater Enjoyment of our Neighbour, is the End of the Commandments respecting him, we perceive the Reason why Religion is summ'd up in the Love of God, and our Neighbour. And if all true Religion of the End respecting them consists in the Love of them, how devious and absurd is that modern Pretence to true Religion, which erects its System upon dry *Rationality*; pure *Understanding*, and gazing *Admiration*?

If the End God has propos'd to our Action is the true End of our Action, and is the first Principle of a religious Conversation; and all moral Actions are denominat'd from their End and Intention, more than their Effects and Events;

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Events; it is an allow'd Maxim, that whatever is the first Principle in constituting a Thing, ought often to be recurr'd to, to keep it from deviating. Habits, being an Aggregate of many single Acts, are of the very self-same moral Species with the particular Acts which compound them. And when the *Love of Virtue* is put to the Test, what it is that in reality still feeds and supplies that Love, our Author is forc'd to own the Truth against his Conscience, and the whole Design of his Book. "'Tis certain, says he, on the other Side, that the Principle of Fear of future Punishment, and Hope of future Reward, how mercenary and servile soever it may be accounted, is yet in many Circumstances a great Advantage, Security, and Support to Virtue \*."

Was *Socrates's* Love of Virtue mercenary and servile, who is the best *Deist* upon Record, excepting *Job*. When the genuine Nature of the Love of Virtue is called in Question in Speculation, whether the Love of it is, for its own sake, or for the sake of Benefit and future Reward; is there any possible Way of deciding it better, than recurring to a Test; and that Test a Matter of Fact? And did not both those great Heroes support themselves and their Virtue in their greatest Distress, upon the future Prospect of the Favour of God? And as they lived, and loved Virtue upon that untraversible Principle of natural Religion, God is, and is a Rewarder of those that diligently seek him, in the Desire, and Sense of the want of Revelation, so they died in the Love of Virtue upon the same Principle.

\* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 60.

FOR they were *genuine* Deists according to Nature, living in the *Fear* of God, and therefore were *Realists* in their Respects to Virtue. But the *modern* Deists, who erect their System upon the Principles of this Author, may entitle themselves to any Name sooner than *true sound* Deists. They make mighty high Pretences to the Love of Virtue, upon the old *Stoical* Principle of being *its own Reward*, exclusive of the Fear or Favour of God; and so are mere *Nominals* in the Love of it, and are like to be left in the lurch, as *Brutus* was, with the Name Virtue. For this Author, more exalted in his own Opinion, than in Title, derides the Fear of God as ridiculous *Cowardice*, and any Regard to his Rewards as no less ridiculous *Avarice* \*. The *Stoicks* stood to their Principle in their acutest Sufferings. But this Author shews himself Master neither of their Courage, nor their Consistency. For when his as *nominal* Virtue is put to the *Pinch*, then he calls in *Rewards*, *Rewards* to its Security and Support, at the same time he professedly derides the Belief of them. Is not this a great Inconsistency in his *moral* Architecture? He neither builds in the *Stoick* Order and Proportion, nor in the *Socratick*; but makes a Jumble of two Contrarieties to erect one *Whole*.

Is that moral System beautiful, or deform'd, which is destitute of an intelligent super-intending Power, whose head Business is to reward, and punish according to the Agent's Deportment? Is that Building of that great *Connoisseur*

\* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 129.

in

in Beauty, or the Admirers of it most to be admired at? The *Antinomian* Principle of serving and pleasing God, after discarding any Obligation to his Laws and Commandments, is not more absurd or fantastical. Besides, they who make their Duty their Interest, and engage themselves to Virtue, as God would have them, for the Sake of the solid Reward he has annexed, have all the ideal Charms of the Beauty of Virtue, Honesty, moral Taste, as entire to entertain them by the Way, as those *Inamorato's* or *Don Quixot's* of abstracted Charms, who scorn their supreme Interest in the Pursuit. And therefore where such an *Interest* joins in the Pursuit of Things *lovely*, the Scent must be stronger, and the Chase surer and brisker.

AND thus we rightly intend and pursue the Good and Happiness of Ourselves, the Service of God, and the Benefit of our Neighbour, in one and the same Action. For God has made our Duty and Interest, his Glory and our own Good the same Thing; they are but different Expressions importing the same Meaning. Man's Happiness was the certain End of God, in creating him; when that is intended, his *Glory* is effectually intended, tho' unmentioned: When an intended Work is accomplish'd, and the Work-Master attains the End proposed from it, he at the same Time attains all the Glory resulting, or desired from it: And when the *Glory of God* is mention'd as the End of our Actions, what does that point to, but a due Care over them, not to disappoint him of his End in creating and preserving us? When mention'd as the End of our Praise, what is that but acknowledging to his Bounty the Receipt of our Happiness?

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Happiness? So that if God seeks his own Glory, by communicating of his Goodness towards our Happiness, we can never otherwise seek his Glory, but by making his Methods effectual to our own Happiness in his rewarding Favour; at the same time we design our own true Happiness in all that we do, we design his Glory: *We eat, and drink, and should act in all other Things to our own Happiness, therefore are we bid to do the same to the Glory of God; and to glorify his Goodness by our Thanksgiving.* Wherein does the Glory of a Governor consist but in consulting the general Happiness of the Governed? If that is the Scope of his Power, and the Aim of his Authority, and God is our supreme Governor, *Good, or God* for that purpose, we can never think of our own, in concert with the general Happiness of Society here and hereafter, but we think of the Glory of God. The *Deists* therefore, who neither intend his Glory, nor their own future Happiness from his Rewards, in any thing they do, do violently and unnaturally remove the moral Actions of Men from the Center God has appointed to them.

No well-meaning Christian, who duly designs his own eternal Happiness, ought therefore to be disquieted; tho' I am afraid not a few have been put under false Fears, where no Fear was, lest they should be Hypocrites, because they don't feel in themselves that they love God, and Virtue enough *for their own Sake*, but unluckily happen to think at the same Time, of their own Advantage by it. That Expression *for their own Sake*, tho' very common, when it comes to be examin'd, is doubtless nothing more than a Stricture of Piety, and an ex-

alted

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alted Commendation of God and Virtue, and ought to be construed always, in this Life at least, with that Qualification. Tho' the Kingdom of Heaven consists of Righteousness, as being the Law of that Kingdom, yet that Law is admirable and amiable with respect to its happy Consequences upon the Subjects.

FOR in a strict Intendment, *exclusive* of all Thoughts of our *own* Interest therein, it is, 1. With respect of God; *without Faith*, the Scripture tells us, *it is impossible to please him*; and what is that Faith, but as it follows, that he is, and is a *Rewarder* of those that diligently seek to please him? The true Notion therefore is not to pretend to love Virtue for its *own Sake*, but for *God's Sake*, *i. e.* to do good not for secular Ends and Expectations, but with intuition on his Command, who sees in secret whatever is intended to him, and will hereafter *reward openly* for it. 2. With respect to ourselves it is, in Fact, impracticable in this State of Things. But what is worse, a kind of setting up for Independency, or a scorning to be beholden, or acknowledge ourselves to be *what we are*, dependant needy Beings; an actual undervaluing of God's Rewards; preposterous and inconsiderate Arrogance in such indigent Creatures as we are, it is a false stating our own Case, and therefore must be a wrong Scheme.

Do we pretend to add any thing to God, by pretending to *love him for his own Sake*? Does he really stand in any need of our Love, or can we think it is requir'd of us on his own Account? If not, let us make Sense of it, and love him as heartily as ever we can, by keeping his

CHAP. his Commandments for *our* own Sake. For  
XVI. we indeed stand in need of all the good  
Effects of those ardent Streamings and Inclinations of the Mind towards the Author of our Felicity, as they return upon the Mind with Interest, add great Improvement to it, by refining it from the Love of this World, and fitting it for a better. The End of loving God is to be like him, and the End of that is our own Happiness.

OUR Love of God is not a giving, but an indigent *receiving* Love; we love him because he first loved us, a Love of Gratitude for his *relative*, munificent, and undeserved Kindnesses. What have we to give, but the little Nothing of our Thanks, which acknowledges our Dependance, his Fulness, and our Need of Receiving; and is so far acceptable to the generous Giver of all our Enjoyments, and of our Hopes of more? So that to pretend our Love of God in this Life ought to be so *simple, pure, and unmix'd*, as to have no other Object than merely the *Excellency of that Being itself*, in order to render it acceptable, or convince our own Minds of the Sincerity of our Love towards him, is indeed to make our Love *unacceptable* to him, to convict ourselves of *Hypocrisy* before him, and of being *Flatterers* in Love, and *Sycophants* in Devotion.

BUT the more *dependant* we make ourselves on him in acknowledging the Receipts of all that we have in this Life, of the Means of Grace, and the Hope of Glory in the next, then our Love and Devotion respecting him as what he is to *us*, our *Benefactor* in these Things, is truly grateful

grateful and becoming us; and therefore grateful and acceptable to him. And the offering such Love must appear to the Heart and Conscience to be perfectly *sincere* and dutiful in such Creatures as we are; because it proceeds from the *Sense* of our Dependancy, as being his *Creatures*, recipient and expectant of all our Good. If our Author admits the *Thought of Self-Happiness* and *Fruition* \* or *Gratitude* † into the Love of God, then he admits *Self-Interest*; then he excludes *pure Esteem, Excellency, and own Sake*: And therefore can be no *Apology* for that Principle.

IT is ridiculous in him to alledge there, in order to remove *Mercenariness* out of Religion, and make it *liberal*: “How shall one deny “that to serve God by *Compulsion*, or for *Interest* merely, is *servile* and *mercenary*?” For who that considers either the Nature of God or Man, can grant it *mercenary* to serve him in the Way he himself requires, and from the Motives all his true Servants recorded in Scripture have *actually* serv'd him? Was *their* Religion *servile* and *illiberal*? Does the greatest Wisdom we are capable of in declining the greatest Evils that can befall us, deserve the Name of *Compulsion*? Or to pursue the greatest Happiness of our Nature, is that a reproachful *Interest*? He reproaches only himself and his own System, by adding in the next Page, “That altho' this “Service of *Fear* be allow'd ever so low or “base; yet *Religion* still being a *Discipline* and “Progress of the Soul towards Perfection, the “Motive of Reward and Punishment is *Pri-*

\* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 270. † *Ibid.* pag. 272.

“ *many*



CHAP. " *many* and of the highest Moment with us;  
XVI. " till being capable of more sublime Instruc-  
tion, we are led from this *servile* State to  
" the generous Service of *Affection* and *Love*?"  
If the Motive is *Primary* in serving God in this  
World, why does he presently after in the  
Margin inconsistently make it only *Supple-*  
*mental*?

BESIDES, it is a more liberal, and less  
mercenary Morality, by Faith and Hope to ex-  
pect the Reward of Happiness, from the inter-  
posing Distribution and Allotment of our Hea-  
venly Governor, fulfilling his general Promise,  
than to depend upon and be wholly influenced  
by a Stoical Notion of rewarding Happiness, as  
necessarily and inseparably connected to Virtue  
by a blind Fatality. Necessity and Fate would,  
in that Case, preside and be the only Deity, and  
there would be no longer room for Faith, or  
Hope, or Prayer, which helps to qualify the  
Soul with virtuous Dispositions; at the same  
time it resigns up itself in Submission to all  
the Disposals of Providence in this World; but  
any Regard to the heavenly Will, or his Discrimi-  
nation in the next Life, would become useless,  
upon that Supposition. If Love consists in an  
Union of Mind and Interest, Inclinations and  
Designs, we must forego our own mistaken  
ones, and, by Imitation, unite ourselves to those  
of God; and the Proof of that Progress in  
uniting ourselves by Love to him, is keeping  
his Commandments; which are Prescriptions,  
as well for our unlearning Evil, as learning  
Good, and correcting the false Love of Self  
into that which is good and true and divine, by  
copying after God in so many Attitudes of Like-  
ness

ness and Similitude. So that *we love God because* CHAP.  
*he first loved us*, in first making Man in his XVI.  
own Image; and when he had unmade himself,  
by Transgression, making him over again as it  
were, by sending his Son in the Likeness of  
Man.

WHAT makes the Happiness of God, makes  
also ours, by Imitation and Communication.  
When the Love of him perfects us in the Imita-  
tion of liking, desiring, and pursuing the same  
Things and Views with him, it gives us Posses-  
sion of him, makes us partake of his Happiness,  
and derives it upon ourselves. The more we  
know and consider God and his Ways, the more we  
love, the more we imitate, the more we are like  
him. And his Perfections of *Holiness*, *Justice*,  
*Mercy*, &c. are the Exemplars of all Virtue,  
the Patterns of our Imitation, the Objects of  
our Love, and the Source that communicates  
Happiness to us. And as that future Fruition  
consists in delighting in God, being like him,  
and receiving of his Abundance in proportion  
to the Increase of our Likeness, we must carry  
Oil in the Lamp with us; for there is none to  
be borrow'd, or bought at the unexpected  
Hour; but we must be previously fitted with  
some Likeness and Qualification, in order to be  
changed into and invested with more glorious  
Likeness; and if we don't learn to love God in  
this World, where we go to School to learn it,  
we shall have no Notion of it hereafter, and so  
be destitute of all Qualification for Happiness in  
his Presence. So that all our Love for him  
here, is for the sake of being happy with him  
for evermore.

Is it culpable? Is it not rather commendable for a Traveller to think of his Journey's End; or a Stranger of his Home? This was certainly the *Viaticum*, or Provision in the Way, of the old Heroes of Faith in their Road to Heaven, insomuch that one of the *Greek Commentators* affirms, that the Thoughts of *returning home*, and *being Strangers or Sojourners in this World*, is the first Virtue, and every Virtue in this World\*. These Candidates for Heaven, and wise Oeconomists of Happiness, having no express Revelation of the Gospel, but as it served to shew their Faith, that a heavenly Country was to be preferred to an earthly, wisely follow'd the Dictates of Nature in preferring a greater Good to a less, and a less Evil to a greater, in Virtue of the Promise of God to Adam, and afterwards renew'd to Abraham.

BUT the noble Author last cited deviates from Nature, in order to attain his malevolent Ends against Revelation, (in Opposition to which he seems to have had the most *unnatural* Prejudices) by a general Law and Principle of his System of Virtue, he discards the Consideration of *private Good*, or *Self-Affection*, from having any Share in it; discards also the natural Dictates of common Prudence and Conscience, for preferring the greater to the less private Good; and depreciates the Virtue built upon that Principle of common Sense, and Nature, under the Notion of a *Bargain*. His Words are,

\* Ἡ πρώτη ἀρετὴ, καὶ ἡ πάντα ἀρετὰν τὸ εἶναι εἶναι τοῦ κόσμου τούτου. Chryst. Heb. xi. 13. And I may add, tho' they were Strangers in this World, they were intimately known to and acquainted with the Maker of it.

“ Now

“ Now the more there is of this violent Affection towards *private Good*, the less Room is there for the other sort [Affection] towards *Goodness itself*, or any good and deserving Object, worthy of Love and Admiration for its own sake; such as God is universally acknowledged.”—And afterwards speaking of Resignation to his Will, that there is “no more Worth or Virtue [in such an Instance] than in any other Bargain of Interest: The Meaning of his Resignation being only this, *That he resigns his present Life and Pleasures conditionally, for that which he himself confesses to be beyond an Equivalent; eternal Living in a State of highest Pleasure and Enjoyment* \*.”

AND elsewhere, “I know too, that the mere Vulgar of Mankind often stand in need of such a rectifying Object as the Gallows before their Eyes. Yet I have no Belief that any Man of a *liberal Education*, or common *Honesty*, ever needed to have Recourse to this Idea in his Mind, the better to restrain him from playing the Knave. And if a *Saint* had had no other Virtue than what was rais'd in him by the same Object of Reward and Punishment, in a more *distant State*; I know not whose Love or Esteem he might gain besides: But for my own part, I should never think him worthy of mine †.” He adds in the next Page, “Nothing is ridiculous but what is *deform'd*: Nor is any thing Proof against Raillery except what is *handsome and just*.” And presently after, “Nothing so successful to

\* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 59. † *Ibid.* Vol. I. pag. 127.

CHAP. "be play'd upon, as the Passions of Cowardice  
XVI. "and Avarice."

Is this his Ridicule of *Christian* Virtue? The *Ridicule* recoils and fixes only upon himself; according to his own Maxim, *the Ridicule, if ill placed at first, will certainly fall at last where it deserves* \*. And that is true enough, according to the old Maxim, *Risu inepto nihil ineptius*. Seeing then he ridicules the Instincts and Operations of *Nature* and *common* Sense, and the Influence of all Laws human and divine, in order to ridicule Christianity; I ask his Admirers, where does the Ridicule fall? I would not have it fall, if it could be help'd, upon them, or their adored Author; because in Truth, the Matter is too serious for such Levity.

How in Fact is that *common* Honesty, which supercedes the Fear of the Gallows, first educated in Subjects, but from the *religious* Principle of the superior Fear of God, to whom they must give an Account of their Actions? If that had its due Effect upon all Persons, there would be no need of Civil Laws with *such* Sanctions: For the Law is not made for the *Righteous*, who maintain their Character upon that Principle; but for the *Unrighteous*, and *Disobedient*, who degenerate from it; as *Indictments* for the Breach of the Law supposes, and arraigns the Criminal first and foremost for *not* having the Fear of God before his Eyes. If all the Laws Divine and Human suppose the *Degeneracy* of human Nature, and are grounded on it; and the heavenly Legislature, and likewise the earthly, shew

\* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 10.

their

their Wisdom in providing Remedies and Helps CHAP. XVI.  
against it, and annexing Sanctions to their respective Laws, which give them all their Efficacy; is the Degeneracy of human Nature, to be ridiculed as a Phantom, a Thing confess'd and felt by all the wise Men in the World? And are the Laws of God and Man to be banter'd and laugh'd at? For to ridicule the Sanctions, without which the Laws are but Cobwebs, is a direct unavoidable Ridicule upon the Laws of both. A decent Laugh indeed!

It is true, *Epicurus* of old, and *Hobbs* of late, maintain'd the Principle of *Self-Affection* and *private* Good; but it was in the *depraved* Sense, and vicious Extreme; *Self* was *all in all* with them. They excluded Benevolence, Providence, and all *Conscience* towards God or Man out of their Scheme: And so the Passion for *Self* having no *inward* Sense of God, nor of the Publick to regulate it in the Heart, whence it springs, becomes *Atheism* and the worst of Evils in Society. But with that Regulation and Reference constantly guiding and directing it, it moves in Sphere, and does all Duty to God, and Man. Accordingly *Socrates*, and *Epictetus*, the most eminent upon Heathen Record, as well for the Practice, as the Knowledge of moral Virtue, both espoused this Principle under the same Regulation; and conducted their Actions by the Expectation of the Favour of God, and his Rewards for well-doing. But this *Visionary* in Virtue and Reformation having made a great Discovery of the *Poet's* Meaning of *Sensus Communis* \*, that it signifies *Publick Sense*, or Affec-

\* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 103:

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tion,

CHAP. XVI. tion, makes that his first and only Principle of Virtue ; and, at once, expels Regard to *Self*, to *God*, to any of his *Rewards* or *Punishments*, out of his System ; at least from having any rightful Share in *his* Virtue ; save only by the by at a dead Pinch future Rewards and Punishments are allow'd to show their Heads. For he professedly ridicules the having Respect to God's Rewards and Punishments as *Avarice*, and *Cowardice*, as above observed.

*Skin for Skin and all that a Man hath will be give for his Life* ; tho' it came from a wiser and more virtuous Deist, and a far better Philosopher than his Disciples can pretend our Author to have been, he rallies it \* nevertheless as Heterodox Sophistry, as if it was unnatural. What is *natural* in the Consultations of every Agent is too filthy to mix with his pure Virtue ; that being a Composition of an *Ideal*, *Transcendental* Notion opposed to *Self*. Yet the Truth forces the Confession from him, that it is the Height of Wisdom, no doubt, to be *rightly Selfish* †.

WHY is Truth so strong and prevailing but because it is Nature ? And why is *Self-Preservation* the strongest Principle within us, but because it is the same Nature ? As long as that Principle subsists, and is influenced by a due Regard to him who is our *Preserver*, the Juggle and Fascination of his pretended Virtue must vanish before it ; as being in *Reality* nothing better than the Nature, and the Self-moving Principle of Man *inverted*.—Is that *beautiful*, or is it deform'd, which delineates real Life, and Nature

\* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 123.

† *Ibid.* pag. 21.

CHAP. XVI. in an inverted Order ? It may carry a great Sound with it, as many other Cheats do, which pretend the *Good of the Publick* and nothing else ; but it is the Sound of Words and nothing more that captivates the Admirers ; because in fact and sober Sense, it is impracticable by the Generality ; and I wish that was not the Author's real Policy, to set up Virtue upon a Principle plausible (in false Theory) but in good Truth equivalent to being impracticable ; which, under the *Name*, effectually banishes the *Thing* Virtue out of the World.

If such a *School* of Virtue, set up in Contradiction to *real practising* Nature, is a *moral Deformity*, then according to our Author's own Distinction, that such is the *true* Object of Ridicule, how can his System escape it ? If it is neither *handsome* nor *just* to establish an impracticable Foundation of Virtue, how can it be Proof against that Raillery he would set on Foot ? especially when the Laughing Faculty is generally most lavish against your *Impostors* and *Pretenders* to Things against the real Powers, and known Movements of Nature. The Paramount of all Ridicule upon Record is, *Parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus*.—— But if he digs a Pit for others, and falls into it himself, who will pity him, or help laughing ? For a *Bull* in Sense is certainly to all Men of Sense an aukward ridiculous *Beau* in fine Words !

WHENCE that Expression, \* *I would not be guilty of such a Thing for the whole World* ? Not from his *speculative* Publick-Sense, but *common Sense*, in the obvious Meaning, habitually taught

\* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 133.



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and inculcated in *Christendom* from that Maxim of Profit and Loss, whose Author was *Christ*, *If a Man should gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul.* — If the Followers of this great Lover of Paradox, more than of Virtue, will vouchsafe to shew common Sense in practising upon that divine Maxim, we are agreed.

EPICURUS, Hobbs, Spinoza, and almost all the eminent *Atheists* and *Fatalists*, are recorded as passionate Admirers and Extollers of Virtue for its own Sake, not for the Hope of any Reward after Death, but for the *Excellence of Virtue itself*, and the Advantage the Followers of it receive in this Life; which evinces, that it has been a general Combination to attack and subvert Religion, under these false Colours; that the Pretences to this *aerial* Love of Virtue commonly run the highest where the Life of *real* Morality and Religion is made a Victim, and lies bleeding and dying at their Feet: And that the owning or disowning the Being of a God amounts to one and the same Irreligion, wherever a future Judgment, the Influences of those Rewards and Punishments (the Sinews of his Laws, and Instruments of his Government) are denied or derided, and Duty and Obligation thrown off the Hinges: the Consequences, which naturally follow, are very plain; The Worship of God is *Enthusiasm*; Christianity an *Imposture*; and Heaven and Hell a *Sweetmeat*, or *Rod* for *Children* to take their Physick †. They ought to have no Influence upon Virtue according to him, for he says a Man can be Good and Virtuous in *no* Degree till he likes and affects Good-

† An Expression of the Author of *Charact.* Vol. II. p. 247.  
ness

ness and Virtue for its own Sake, and as amiable CHAP.  
in itself ‖. The Truth forces itself upon him a XVI.  
little after, and he finds himself under a Necessity to own 'tis certain on the other Side, that the Principle of "*Fear of future Punishment*" and "*Hope of future Reward*", how mercenary "and servile soever it may be accounted, is yet, "in many Circumstances, a great Advantage and "Support to Virtue ‡." What is this but advancing a notional Principle, for subverting the Virtue of *Christendom*, under a whimsical Distinction?

Now according to the Observation of the Author of *Christianity as old, &c.* *That every Exception to a general Rule is founded upon a general Rule itself*; the above Exception, which he allows of, must certainly be acknowledg'd the truest, first, superior general Rule; being so evidently founded in *Nature* and the *Truth of Things*; consequently, that his Doctrine of Virtue must be excepted out of it, as an *Extravagance* and a Rant of *Enthusiasm*, being grounded in an *unnatural* Endeavour to put asunder what God and Nature have join'd together. Had he first made a due Inquiry into Nature, he had made a better *Inquiry concerning Virtue*. For that which makes Virtue *impracticable* to the *Generality*, according to the Measures of Man in his present State, can never be the Way to serve Virtue, or recommend it, in *good earnest*, to Practice.

WHAT truer, and yet what worse Character can be given of the *Deists* Religion, who reject Christianity, than that it is apparently bottom'd

‖ *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 66. ‡ *Ibid.* Vol. I. pag. 10.  
upon

CHAP. upon *Ignorance*, or *Mistakes*, both of the *Nature*  
 XVI. of *Man*, and *God*? And that *they fight against*  
 true Religion (the invincible Gospel) in the War  
 of *Ignorance*; as it is elegantly express'd, *Wisd.*  
*xiv. 22.* Their *Blunders* about the *Goodness* of  
 God have been shewn before, and shewn to be  
 their *Sheet Anchor*. And as to the *Nature* of  
 Man, is it not absurd to go about to *stifle*, so  
 inhumanly *stifle* those Springs of Action in hu-  
 man Nature; and so unnaturally *baffle* those De-  
 sires of Reward, which natural Religion inspires;  
*God is, and is also a Rewarder of those that dili-*  
*gently seek him.*

AND out of Spite to the Christian Revelation,  
 which has made those Rewards so bright and  
 glorious, and attainable upon the most rea-  
 sonable Easiness, is it not monstrous in *their*  
 Leaders to set up an unnatural Dominion of Ir-  
 religion over their wretched Votaries, by dis-  
 couraging the most effectual Principles and Mo-  
 tives to Virtue? Does not Christianity cherish,  
 cultivate, water those *natural* Seeds of Virtue,  
 and push them to Growth and Increase by the  
 Prospect of the most *glorious Harvest*? Does it  
 not hold out a Crown of Reward, more pre-  
 cious and ponderous than all the Crowns of this  
 World, to the Faith of the *true* Followers of  
 Nature and of God? For every one who truly  
 and diligently does so, embraces and super-adds  
*Christ*; who came to reveal God, and Nature.  
 The Sources of the divine Goodness, and Per-  
 fections, no otherwise discoverable, yet, being  
 discovered, are found perfectly suitable, and en-  
 gaging to our rational Faculties. Nor is there  
 any true System, either of the Nature of God,  
 or Man, in his present degenerate State, but in  
 his

his most wise and merciful Government over us, CHAP.  
 by the Mediator *Christ Jesus*. And does not XVI.  
 this judicious Observance of Nature demon-  
 strate the Author of Christianity to be the un-  
 doubted Author of Nature? Whereas they  
 must make Converts to the *Ignorance* of *God*,  
 and *Man*, and *Nature*, before they can make  
 Profelytes to their *Deism*.

In short, as at the Beginning, *Jesus*, and the  
*Resurrection*, and his *Judging* the World in Right-  
 eousness, those fundamental Reasons for Re-  
 pentance, were receiv'd as *babbling* by the *Epi-*  
*cureans*, and *Stoicks*, who of all the Sects of Phi-  
 losophers were most contrary to Christianity; so  
 a *modern Deist* seems to be an unhappy Compo-  
 sition of both of them, and therefore nourishes  
 a double Spite against that Religion. In con-  
 tradiction to the better Sentiments of *Socrates*,  
 he maintains with the *Stoick*, the *Self-sufficiency*  
 of Man to all Virtue; and that Virtue is its own  
*self-sufficient Reward*; he slight the Reviviscence  
 of his *Body*, as a Return to Prison, rather than  
 to an original constituent Part of himself; and  
 therefore with the *Epicurean* indulges its Grati-  
 fication, and makes the most of its short Conti-  
 nuance, as an essential Ingredient of his Happi-  
 ness\*: And both Sects join in him, in laying  
 aside the principal Care of divine Providence, by  
 disannulling his special Concern, to *reward* the  
 Righteous, and *punish* the Wicked (the best  
 Thing worth the Concern of superintending Pro-

\* See *Christianity as old*, pag. 14. where the Author makes  
 one End of regulating the Appetites, the conducting the  
 more to the *Pleasure* of the Senses, as one *Constituent* of Man's  
 Happiness, which very well agrees with the History of *Epi-*  
*curus*.

vidence)

CHAP. XVI. vidence) by the Hands of an *appointed Judge*, in the most distinguishing, distributive, conspicuous, and everlasting Manner before all moral Agents. And consequently, his Ill-will to Christianity carries a double Opposition and Resistance to a *Jesus* or *Saviour*; to a *Resurrection*; and to his *Judging* and *Distributing* future Rewards and Punishments. Yet, bating the Resurrection of the *Body*, and the *Person* to judge, *Socrates* could have inform'd him, all their Sentiments are contrary to the Truth and Nature of Things, tho' he should not condescend to be persuaded by *Christ* and his *Apostles*. I am afraid he believes with the *Stoick*, that all Sins are equal, because he makes so light of disbelieving the Gospel.

Who would imagine, yet so it is, that so fine a *Genius*, at ridiculing Christianity under the Name of *Enthusiasm*, should run into *real* Enthusiasm and *Knight-Errantry* himself, in order to explode it? For the same dazzling *Ideal* Notion of Virtue, which led him to contradict, and be very polite in Bombast †, overshooting the Powers

† By *Bombast* I mean, that Excess in Language, or Discord in Sentiment opposite to the *true* Sublime; which owes its Beauty and Grandeur to the expressing Things in Conformity to the *Nature* of Things. Consequently there may be a *false* Sublime in Words of the purest Diction, agreeable and charming enough to those who don't understand the Truth and Harmony of Things, whilst they are affected with the superficial Harmony of Sounds and Fiddles, Words and Periods. Cujuscunque orationem videris sollicitam et politam, scito animum quoque non minus esse pusillis occupatum. Magnus ille remissius loquitur et securius: quæcunque dicit, plus habent fiduciæ quam curæ—Oratio vultus animi est: si circumtonsa est, et fucata et manufacta, ostendit illum quoque non esse *sincerum*, & habere aliquid *fracti*. Sen. Ep. 115. The jejuneness of his Reasoning withers the Verdure of his Expressions,

CHAP. XVI. Powers of Nature and Practice, has also led many *Quietists* †, *Mysticks*, and *pretended Saints* of the *Romish* Church, which sets up its Throne upon the plain Abuse of Nature and Christianity, into the *like* Enthusiastick Extravagancies, Flight and Fancy, and Tokens of Want of Judgment. They would not *touch*, no not they, any of God's *Rewards*, no not with a Pair of Tongs; they would willingly, great Souls! *annihilate* themselves, and their Happiness, before the Image of Virtue they have set up in their own Fancy; and be contented to damn themselves eternally for the sake of the passionate Love they have for God.—But when you hear such Extravagancies, always beware of Cheats, Im-

Expressions, and his Departure from Truth and Nature turns every Shew of Sublime into real Bombast. For as Truth duly represented according to the Nature of Things is the most splendid, magnificent, and affecting of all Things, so polished Words in rounded Periods deviating from the Nature of Things, are no better than a genteel Imposture with respect to right good Sense, an artful Quackish Deception as to Truth, and a Whorish Paint laid upon Nature by a good Hand. A false irreligious Thought cover'd over with pretty sweet Words, is Poison in a Sugar-Plumb: But I hope Religion is not like *Italian* Songs, where the worst Meaning of Words tuned with fine Sounds makes the best Musick.

|| “Contemplative Persons ought to divest themselves of all Affections to all things: They ought to reject and despise all God's Gifts and Favours, and to strip themselves of all Inclinations even for Virtue itself.” Letter from Rome concerning the *Quietists*, pag. 85.

Another of their Tenets is, “True Contemplation must keep itself fix'd only to the Essence of God, without reflecting either on his Persons or his Attributes. And an Act of Faith thus conceiv'd, is more perfect and meritorious, than that which considers God with the Divine Attributes, or with the Persons of the Trinity in it,” pag. 74. Behold a manifest Strain of refined secret Deism, harmonizing in their high Flight, with open modern Deism!

postors,

CHAP. XVI. postors, and Jugglers in Virtue, and the Love of God. For

EVERY sober-minded wise Christian will be sure to shew their Wisdom in regarding their highest Interest above all Things; and conduct their whole Behaviour by that View. Because indeed a due Regard to the Rewards and Punishments of another Life, as brought to Light and administered by *Christ*, have a sober, true, practical Tendency for promoting the doing Good, incomparably beyond any *Deistical* Scheme. And therefore that *Distinction* which the said Author would set up between *Virtue* and *Religion*\*, as if the former was most commonly *diminish'd* and cramped by the latter, couches under it a scandalous, false Reflection upon the *Christian Religion*.

As to that *Narrowness of Spirit* which he pretends is peculiarly observable in the devout Persons, and Zealots of almost every religious Persuasion†. And again, "If by the Height of devout Ex-  
"tasy and Contemplation, we are rather dis-  
"abled in this Respect, and render'd more un-  
"apt to the real Duties and Offices of Civil  
"Life, it may be said that *Religion* indeed is  
"then *too strong* in us||." *Christianity* has nothing to answer for, with respect to such Persons, who neither practise nor understand it; instead of its being *too strong* in such Persons, it is really *too weak*; it only saunters, acts the Child, not the Man; for it does not act and operate in such weak, mistaken Minds according to the

\* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 5, 6, 58, 88.  
58, 116.

|| *Ibid.* pag. 88.

† *Ibid.* pag.

many

many Principles, Precepts, and Examples of doing good inculcated by that Religion; no Defect of which can be laid to its Charge by its greatest Enemies. The true Enthusiast actuates and manages Religion according to his roving Fancy, but is not himself actuated or managed by it, in its true Design. Is any Servant asham'd of his Wages? Or does he commonly do his Work the worse for having Assurance of receiving them? Are not all Men, from the greatest to the least, Servants unto God? The Service is unprofitable to the Master; but the Wages is the making of the Servant: To serve God is to serve ourselves, and the Happiness he made us for. Sir *Isaac Newton*, Princip. pag. 527, says the Word *God* is a relative Term and has reference to *Servants*.

AND if this is the Conclusion and Sum of his best Apology for his chymical System of Virtue, he had better said nothing: "That by  
"building a future State on the Ruins of Vir-  
"tue, Religion in general, and the Cause of a  
"Deity is betray'd; and by making Rewards  
"and Punishments the principal Motives to  
"Duty, the Christian Religion in particular is  
"overthrown, and its greatest Principle, that  
"of Love, rejected and exposed\*." For he quite mistakes the Case; the Practice of Virtue upon the Motive of Reward and Punishment in a future State, is the Foundation of Happiness in that State. How then can the Practice of Virtue be the Ruin of it? It establishes the Religion and Worship of the Deity upon the Bottom God himself has built it on; which Way then is Re-

\* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 279.

ligion



CHAP. ligion in general and the Cause of a Deity betrayed? And if *Christ* is the *Distributor* of the future Rewards and Punishments, and has improved all the Virtues, and the Worship of God by new Means superadded to make all effectual; how is his Religion overthrown? Or in what manner is its greatest Principle, the Love of God and *Christ*, rejected or exposed; when the whole Service of Christianity is a *grateful Acknowledgment of that most surprizing Love* in the Benefits receiv'd, and to be receiv'd?

BUT is it not extremely surprizing and inconsistent in this high-spirited Author, who pretends to be such a passionate Admirer of *disinterested Love*, Friendship, Virtue; if he of all Men, should appear an Enemy to *that Religion*, and *that Love*, and to Christianity upon *their* account; seeing nothing is more apparent, than that the least interested, most generous Virtue, most captivating Love, most heroick Friendship, that ever yet reach'd the Ears of Mortals, enlivens every Page, and inspires the whole System? Could he possibly have been *sincere* in his own *Principle*, and at the same Time forbear to love, adore, and become a Disciple to the *Mediator* of that Religion; if not for his Benefits conferr'd, at least out of *Esteem* of the transcendent *Excellency* of his Actions and Compassions? To scorn to be beholden to his Maker for the Hope of his Rewards or his Assistance in Virtue, is *more* than human! And therefore his aspiring to a Sphere above *mortal Capacity*, and alluring Disciples after him, brings him down to a *Pedant* in Virtue and *Humanity*. His moral Beauty, and his pretended Love of it, are both mis-shapen! his System a *Sham*, and a mean

mean Artifice to overturn the best Religion in CHAP. the World. XVI.

BESIDES, the *Religion* I am speaking of includes *his Virtue* and more; and therefore can't in itself be *narrower* than that. It teaches to work out our own Happiness in both Worlds in dependance upon God's Favour through the *Mediator*; which includes the *whole* of our Happiness in all our Faculties, of Body, and Soul; consequently larger than Virtue in *his* Sense, which he makes to consist in *Affection* to *earthly Society*; and allows it to *Albeists*, as well as Deists; but not in so perfect a Degree\*. As Christianity finds us a Man, it will make us a Man; our *Nature* and Constitution now will be our Nature and Constitution hereafter, only greatly improved in both its Parts: So exactly does Christianity consult *Nature* and improve it.

WHEREAS the *Deist* consigns his *Body* in the Grave to everlasting Oblivion; spurning the said Religion, he spurns all Belief of its *Resurrection*; drops half human Nature, and leaves it in the lurch for any Revivification or Happiness; and so betrays its Cause, in *Futurity*, in the *earnest Expectation of the Creature*, and loses it before all the World. Such wretched Consulters are they of *our common Nature*, and worse Counselors of its joint *Happiness*! They join the Opposers of Christianity from the beginning, in professing to deride this Article of future Hu-

\* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 6, 57, 69. And this Virtue he confines to *Honesty*, and distinguishes it likewise from *Religion* in his *Essay on Wit and Humour*, pag. 93.

CHAP. man Happiness, as a Hope more becoming Worms  
XVI. than Men, in the Pharise of Celsus †.

FOR tho' it is *natural* in us to have Affec-  
tion to Society, as this Author pleads ||, can he  
deny it to be likewise *natural* in us to have Affec-  
tion for *Ourselves*; and that Affection suscep-  
tible of the Influence of Rewards and Punishments  
from our *Maker*, as our greatest Concernment,  
as our highest Reason, as our Religion for lov-  
ing our Neighbour, and doing all the Duties to  
Society; to the Neediest; to Posterity, who  
can't requite us? Yet so unconscionable is he to  
God and Human Nature, as, the better to expel  
all Regard to God as a Governor and Rewarder,  
he tramples upon this *chief* Aspect and Consid-  
eration of *Nature* that is in every Agent; and  
upon the *other* Sense of Natural, sets up his *stalk-*  
*ing Horse* of Virtue, to secure his Game of kill-  
ing *Religion* dead.

LET Men think, as free of Prejudice as they  
please, upon all Matters; but it will be a Shame  
and Reproach, if their actual Free-thinking is  
nothing more than *Half-thinking*, upon the *Na-*  
*ture of a moral Agent*, and the true Reasons and  
Motives of Virtue, in *real Life* and Action. I  
shall therefore apply the Words of this Author  
to himself, because they so exactly fit him, as  
he has degraded the *Nobility of Authorship*, by  
departing so shamefully from *Nature*: "His  
" *Piece will be found ridiculous, when it comes*  
" *thoroughly to be examin'd. For Nature will not*  
" *be mock'd. The Prepossession against her can*

† Σκολήκων ἡ ἐλπὶς, Orig. cont. 240.  
Vol. III. pag. 214.

|| Charrat.

" never

" never be very lasting. Her Decrees and In-CHAP.  
" stincts are powerful; and her Sentiments in- XVI.  
" bred. She has a strong Party abroad; and as  
" strong a one within ourselves: And when any  
" Slight is put upon her, she can soon turn the Re-  
" proach, and make large Reprisals on the Taste  
" and Judgment of her Antagonist \*." To which  
I add the Observation of Lord Bacon, " A lit-  
" tle Philosophy helps to make an *Atheist*, but  
" a great deal brings round to *Religion*." And  
it has been truly observed, that the *Deists* are  
so superficial in solid Learning, that was it not  
to prevent the Ignorant from being seduced by  
their superficial Writings, they would be the  
Contempt of all learned and judicious Chris-  
tians.

BUT Christianity insures the *Resurrection* of the  
*Body*, which is that *peculiar Life* and Immorta-  
lity to both Parts of our Nature, brought to  
Light by the Gospel; which eternal Life is the  
Gift of God, thro' the *Mediator*; who has the  
Gift put into his own Hands, to distribute to  
the World. So very proper is it for him to  
have the final Allotment of the *Ends*, Happiness  
and Misery, who is the Head of all the appoint-  
ed *Means*, and the Author of eternal Salvation.  
And as *eternal Life* is at his Disposal, and attain-  
able only upon the Conditions of *his Gospel*;  
not the natural Consequence of following mere  
Reason for a Guide; but a bountiful and gra-  
tuitous *Superaddition*, as I have made appear be-  
fore, where's the *Deist's* Provision for *eternal*  
*Life*?

\* Charrat. Vol. I. pag. 354.

I 2

A WISE

A WISE Bargain, truly, to lose the *total* Happiness of his Nature in both its Parts ! For if Death, as he owns, is not a Ceasing to be, but a Separation of Soul and Body ; and the Reunion of them to a State of Blessedness is that Immortality and eternal Life, which is the Gift of God to the Faithful in Christ, exclusive of all the Despisers of the Gospel ; where are his Pretences to *that* Life of Body and Soul ? His Fate, as a Despiser, is to perish from all Enjoyments ; and therefore will find his Refurrection to Condemnation of Body and Soul ; which, being void of all Happiness, has not the Name of *Life* ; nor is it privileg'd with the Cessation of the being of either of them ; but a Reunion for ever to suffer the Indignation of God, upon both, for evermore, suffering as they sinn'd together. His vile Body will be rais'd by the Power of him he so much contemns, and chang'd, not into a glorious, but viler Body, and join'd to his infidel Soul, to believe too late, and be buffeted and vilified for an obstinate Fool, to all Eternity, for despising his Truth, contemning his Revelation, and his coming to Judgment. So little Occasion had he to distinguish between the *Atheist* and *Deist*, seeing their End is like to be the same.

AND why should not their End be the same, since their Virtues are the same ? For a Sinner to pretend in *his own Sufficiency* to approach God, is the same as to disown him *to be what he is* ; or a Sinner to be a *Sinner*. Neither of them allow of any *positive Account* hereafter, and in that Respect they are equal. And what signifies allowing Virtue here in *Name*, and God as an In-

spector

CHAP.  
XVI.  
spector in *Name*, or an Example of Benevolence in *Name* ? When they believe no *solemn Account* to be given, or that they shall suffer any thing in *Judgment* from him. Is it so ? then there is no Deficiency in *Atheism* from *Deism*, except the *Example* of the Deity ; but all the Use the *Deists* pretend to make of that, is for Benevolence to Society in this Life ; and now if this Author allows the Practice of Benevolence and all the human Virtues to the *Atheist* in the Places above cited, he makes the Example useless, and, by his own Concession, ought to have own'd *him* upon Equality as to that also.

MR. Bayle proves the *Atheist* capable of *their* Benevolence and human Virtues in various Places of his Dictionary, from the Temper of some, Education of others, Love of Fame, Sense of Dishonour, Rewards and Punishments of the Magistrate, or some Temporal Advantage ; not from the Instinct of Conscience, not upon *religious* Principles, to be sure. And if the *Atheist* may be virtuous not upon a *religious* Principle ; then the Virtues of the *Atheist* and *Deist* are the same, the Principle being the same : Neither of them admitting, nor practising upon the Religion or Principle of being *accountable to God*. Our Author indeed represents the *Atheist* more splenetick, and out of Humour, on Account of Disorders in the System of the World ; and that is all the real Distinction I can perceive he makes out between them. For as to the Pleasure and Pain *naturally* consequent to the Practice of Virtue and Vice, which the *Deist* calls the *future* Rewards and Punishments of them, they are Rewards and Punishments only in *Name* ; nor can the *Deist* upon his own Principles pretend

CHAP. tend to any other *Hereafter-Interest* in Virtue, but that *Hereafter-Pleasure*. Now if that Pleasure is no more than the *natural* Consequence of Virtue, then it is inseparable from it; and then the *Atheist* is entitled to as good a Share of it as the *Deist*. Tho' he does not believe the Immortality of the Soul, he can make no Alteration as to its After-existence: And therefore if he practises Virtue here upon the same Principle with the *Deist*, the same Consequence will follow his Actions, and be its future Appendix, whether he intended or desir'd it, or not. This Author declares either against being *bribed* or *terrified into an honest Practice* \* by God; which is the same thing as to despise his Rewards, and defy his Punishments.

In *Heathen* Countries, ancient or modern, a *Deist* is a Character of Sense and Value before God, and Man; the Wisest of them were sensible of the Want of *true* Revelation, and long'd for the Benefit of it: And the Commonalty were influenc'd by a confus'd Belief and Expectation of *positive* Retributions in a *future* State; and therefore in that Respect, upon a better Footing, than *Deists* in a *Christian* Country. For these reject *positive* Rewards and Punishments of the true Revelation, and in some measure reject the Revelation on Account of the Sanction of the *Punishment*; which, by the way, is a very ridiculous Reason for refusal: Because the beneficial Consequence of their embracing is so very great, the *worst* Terror of the Punishment is levell'd *against their Refusal*, for subduing their stubborn Will; and every one that receives the

\* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 97.

Revelation has it in their own Power to *feel* no ill Effects from an Objection, that is designed to save them. *The Worm* of Conscience *that never dies* may be the *natural* Punishment of Sin; but to that is superadded the *Fire that never shall be quenched*. CHAP. XVI.

WHEN *these* *Deists* therefore talk of *future* Rewards and Punishments, they still take care to talk as if they believed them not, to be sure, not as such. *Such a Person* believing Rewards or Retributions \*, &c. can mean no more according to their Scheme than, *if* such a Person believes, &c. For this Author, lest he should have advanc'd too much, takes care afterwards in his *Miscellaneous Reflections*, to declare himself, and prevent Mistakes. "Even *Conscience*, I fear, such as is "owing to religious Discipline, will make but "a slight Figure where this *Taste* is set amiss. "Among the *Vulgar* perhaps it may do Wonders. A *Devil* and a *Hell* may prevail, where "a *Jail* and a *Gallows* are thought insufficient. "But such is the Nature of the liberal, polish'd, "and refined Part of Mankind; so far are they "from the mere Simplicity of *Babes* and *Sucklings*; that instead of applying the Notion "of a future Reward or Punishment to their "immediate Behaviour in Society, they are apt, "much rather, thro' the whole Course of their "Lives, to shew evidently that they look on "the pious Narrations to be indeed no better "than *Childrens Tales*, or the Amusement of "the mere *Vulgar* †."

\* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 71: pag. 177.

† *Ibid.* Vol. III.



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XVI.

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\* *Charact.* Vol. II. pag. 71:  
pag. 177.† *Ibid.* Vol. III.

As to his profound Respect and religious Veneration of the sacred and solemn *Mysteries of Revelation*, and his steady *Orthodoxy, Resignation, and intire Submission* to the truly *Christian and Catbolick Doctrines* of our *Holy Church*, as by Law establish'd, pag. 315, 316. he had the Privilege of his *Ridicule* to come off of that, as meant in *Jest*, tho' declared, as any one may read, in solemn Earnestness. It is well, if by the same Ridicule, his Followers have not learn'd to justify themselves in the abominable Hypocrisy of receiving the *Sacrament* for Places, when they know in their Conscience they believe nothing of the Matter. And their Religion as to Oaths sworn upon the *Bible* may as justly be suspected.

FOR as they believe those Rewards and Punishments in no other Sense, than as they are the *natural Consequences* of their Actions; and reject the Belief of any *positive* Retribution of any Good or Evil, but what is the neat Produce and natural Sequel of the Action itself: They influence and operate not as *Rewards and Punishments* to be distributed *positively and legally* by God as a Governor; but as *mere Consequences*, which would follow from the Action whether there was any Law, any Sanction, any Account to be given, any Judge, any God. For that Action, which *naturally* produces *all* the Good, or Evil hereafter, operates of *itself* without the Assistance of Law, Sanction, Belief of future Account, Judge, or God.

AND therefore if God is believed not to have that Power, or not to take that Care to reward Virtue,

Virtue, and punish Vice, with some further *positive, legal* Good and Evil, than what is the *natural* Effect and Consequence of the Action; the Thoughts of God, Judge, or future Account, can have no Power left to influence and oblige to the Action. The Action on Account of its Consequence is all that obliges; and yet no body to take an Account of the Performance or Non-performance of it. God is out of the Case, if he has nothing to add besides the *natural* Consequence, for that adds itself without his Interposal.

I AM confirm'd in this by what Mr. Locke has observed, *H. Understanding*, Book II. Chap. xxviii. §. 6. "It would be in vain for one intelligent Being to set a Rule to the Actions of another, if he had it not in his Power to reward the Compliance with, and punish Deviation from his Rule, by some Good and Evil, that is not the natural Product or Consequence of the Action itself. For that being a natural Convenience, or Inconvenience, would operate of itself without a Law. This, if I mistake not, is the true Nature of all Law, properly so called." He adds a little after, "He [God] has a Right to give a Rule where- by Men should govern themselves: We are his Creatures: He has Goodness and Wisdom to direct our Actions to that which is best: And he has Power to enforce it by Rewards and Punishments, of infinite Weight and Duration, in another *Life*; for no body can take us out of his Hands. This is the only true Touchstone of *moral Rectitude*; and by comparing them to this Law, it is, that Men judge of the most considerable *moral Good* or *Evil*"

CHAP. XVI. "Evil of their Actions; that is, whether as  
 XVI. "Duties, or Sins, they are like to procure them  
 "Happiness or Misery from the Hand of the  
 "Almighty." Conform to this rational Principle, the great *Apostle*, who labour'd more than them all, declares the *Premium* of his Virtue not to consist only in inward Satisfaction, but that a *Crown of Righteousness was laid up for him, to be given him by the Lord the righteous Judge AT THE GREAT DAY; and to all those, as well as himself, that lov'd and waited for his glorious Appearing.* There doubtless is a Joy and Satisfaction of Mind, a natural Happiness and Self-Enjoyment attendant upon the Habit and Disposition of Virtue, independent upon the Gospel-Dispensation and its future Distributions; and being annex'd as Fruit to a Tree, may go along with the virtuous Heathens to bless them in another World. But the *remunerative, adjudg'd, supervenient* Happiness allotted to the Righteous at that Day (and so of Misery, over and above the natural Disquietude of Vice) is the Effect of the *Mediation of Christ*, and proceeds from the bountiful Goodness, and severe Judgment of God, in that merciful Dispensation towards Men. So that, whilst a virtuous Heathen in a Heathen Country may enjoy his Degree of Happiness hereafter; the virtuous *Deist* in a *Protestant* State (if such there can be, considering the *Opposition* of their Mind to the only Truth that can fructify Virtue) will for their Infidelity be cursed by that Judge, and wither'd away like the Fig-Tree, from the natural good Effects of Virtue. So contrary to Nature, and Truth, and the real conscientious Good of Society, and of themselves, is the Religion of the *Deists*.

FOR

FOR as to *Fear* of future Punishment, this Author has taken care to run that down as *Enthusiasm*. Speaking of the Nature of that Passion, he says, "It can hardly be without some Mixture of *Enthusiasm*, and Horrors of a superstitious Kind \*." If these Men have cheerfully thrown off the judicial Distribution of avenging Punishment hereafter, what Hold, what Security can the Magistrate or Society have of such Persons Fidelity to *sovereign*, or *social* Rights; which so very frequently and unavoidably depend upon a conscientious Regard to an *Oath*? But what Conscience can he have of that Appeal to God, who believes he will not positively inflict any thing on him in another Life for the Breach of it? God is only a modish speculative Theory to adorn Discourse, or an Inquiry after Virtue, but he is a God not to be fear'd in their Actions; or to be govern'd by; or appealed to in an *Oath*.

AND this way of *not fearing* God is the true Secret of the Method, of what he calls putting himself and his Disciples into *good Humour*, whenever they think upon him †. And he gives this Reason of not having any Fear of him; *for it is Malice only, and not Goodness, that makes us afraid* ||; which I have confuted before. The requisite Fear that evil Doers should maintain towards *Civil* Government, is derived from the Fear of *God*, the supreme *religious* Governor over Men, as its Fountain, and is fed by it. Governors are the Image of God, as *Governors*:

\* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 307.  
 || *Ibid.* pag. 32.

† *Ibid.* pag. 22, 33.

But

CHAP. XVI. But how should the Image be respected, when the *Principal* is neglected? Is not this the old Misdemeanour, is not this renewing the great Offence against God, and *Society*, *verbis ponere, re tollere*? To grant the Belief of a God in *Words*, and as a mere *Word*, and by *Infidel* Tenets at the same time subvert all *real* Effects of it.

BUT if there is most certainly some future Account, and the Light of Nature suggests it; and Christianity, ever following and unfolding Nature and the Truth of Things, ratifies, and renders it more explicit; then there is a *Judge*; then there are Rewards and Punishments in good earnest, and to some Purpose; then they consist of *additional, positive, legal* Pain, and Pleasure over and above what God has naturally annex'd to the Performance of such and such Actions, as a *present* natural Encouragement, or Discouragement to them; and a *Foretaste* of greater, to be hoped, or feared. It is very true, that Habits of Virtue are previously necessary to make Heaven enjoyable, by seasoning the Understanding, Will, and Affections to it; and a great Part of its Happiness indispensably depends upon the Degrees of that Qualification, as our bodily Senses are necessary to enjoy this World: But some further positive additional Enjoyments (as it is natural to suppose the Wages differs from the Work) seem to be the Favour of that Reward, whether by enlarging the Faculties, or multiplying the Objects, or both; or by other Additions that have not entered into the Heart of Man to conceive. As temporal Life is the Qualification, but not the Giver of temporal Enjoyments; so Virtue is a *Qualification*, but not the

CHAP. XVI. the Giver of future Crowns of Glory and Felicity: For they are *adjudg'd*, and are *given*; nevertheless it is requir'd in the Nature of Things, that a previous Taste be contracted, a Temper and Constitution fitted to render the Person capable of enjoying the *Gift*.

IT would, otherwise, seem a formal Piece of Pageantry to summon all the World to Judgment; only to tell the Righteous, and the Wicked, very gravely, that they should enjoy or suffer the *natural* Pleasure and Pain resulting from their Actions, for the whole Duration of their Being, without any thing to interrupt. They knew that before they went out of the World; and the Judge's telling them so, ever so sententiously, makes neither of them one Syllable better, nor worse, in their State. But, at the great Discrimination of every Man according to his Works—*Go you to this Hand—You cursed to the other—Enter you Blessed this Place of Joy—Dwell you in Light—I cast you into outer Darknes—Take you Dominion over five Cities—You over ten—Depart you to many Stripes—You to few—*distinctly demonstrates on the Right Hand and the Left, *additional, positive* Pleasure and Pain of the highest Nature. If the punitive Pain, or recompensing Pleasure and Glory were confin'd only to the Mind, retrospecting its Actions in this World, and looking forward into the eternal State of its own Temper and Condition consequent upon those Actions; what need of the *Resurrection* of the *Body*, or solemn Severation to *Places* for ever separate; if the Places themselves were not, together with the respective Treatment, *juridically, positively* remunerative, and vindictive?

BESIDES,



BESIDES, if Rewards and Punishments were left wholly to *natural Consequences* of Mens Actions, then, as there is a Miscellany of good and bad Actions (more or less) in all Men, every Man would be both rewarded and punish'd; which destroys the future Distinction, and Allotment. That Distinction therefore and Allotment can be supported on nothing but an *interposing Judge*, who knows the Thoughts of all Men, and makes solemn Severation and Distribution, before all Men and Angels, to every Man according to his Works. Besides, what is it that makes Faith towards God, or towards our Lord Jesus Christ, or Repentance from dead Works, or Obedience either to natural Religion, or to the Gospel, so indispensable, but this quickning Article of Belief and Practice, the *Resurrection of the Dead* and a *future Judgment*? Inasmuch as without this final End and Account of our Actions, they would all be in vain, and of no Profit beyond the Grave. It is Unbelief with respect to the *Promises* of entering into Rest which constituted the *evil Heart* of Unbelief, and for ever excluded from the *Rest*; so the like Unbelief of the *Deists* totally subverts Natural Religion, and entirely vacates all the religious Effects of it, at the same time it pretends to the Belief of God. But if they believe God the first Cause, they ought to consider him also as the last *End* of Man.

THUS God's judging the World in Righteousness by the Man *Christ Jesus* makes up the true Account to Reason of his governing it. If he is the *Governor*, that implies *Laws*; and that supposes some *Sanctions* in the Apprehension of those who

who have a Sense in their Hearts of those Laws: CHAP. XVI.  
If Laws, there must of course be a *Judge* of Obedience, and Disobedience to them.

AND if the Judge himself, before he would take that Office upon him, came into the World first as a *Mediator* to teach those Laws most perfectly, and explicitly unfold those Sanctions as far as they could be apprehended by reason of our bodily Imperfections; if he obey'd those Laws himself, according to which he would pass Sentence; and, if by his own Death he made Reconciliation for Transgressions against them, upon Condition of renewing Obedience with sincere Repentance, and better Performance, as Men were able, and of believing in him (where Belief was proposed) who by the most divine Generosity did so much to supply all their unavoidable Deficiencies; and if, before he left the World, he instituted Means, Aids, Helps, and Instruments for facilitating Mens Repentance, and improving their Devotion, and Obedience; then he might well return to Heaven, and before God, and Man take upon him the Reins of Government and Judgment over Man, as the fittest *King* and *Judge* that could be elected by either of them.

IF a Judge, then inevitably follow those *positive sensible* Retributions, visible Glory, Honour and Distinction of the Good from the Bad, in the *audible* Sentence, *visible* Effects, and *eternal* Marks of God's Favour, and Displeasure towards our Behaviour in this Life. On the one Hand, *seeing* God as he is; *being with Christ*, *Crowns*, *Rivers of Pleasure*, &c. On the other Hand, *Darkness*, *Companionship* of Devils, *Disgrace*

CHAP. XVI. *grace and Gnawing of Teeth, Lakes of Fire and Brimstone, &c.* capable of communicating eternal Felicity, and everlasting Anguish, as well to the raised *sensible* Body, as to the rational reflecting Soul. A joyful, and a dreadful Hearing the final Ends of our several Actions! And those are the *external Motives* I have been treating of.

BUT tho' they are external, yet being the Object and End of Actions, they are the *first* moral Motives that set all to work; they are the End of us, and of our Actions, therefore tie us unto God our Governor, our Actions to his Laws and Covenant; making our Actions Morality or Duty, and us, knowing those Consequences, and conscious of those Obligations, moral, accountable Agents. They are the final Difference and Distinction, State and Allotment of moral Good and Evil; being the recompensing Possession of the greatest Good, or greatest Evil, God, or the Devil; and of the Virtue in Action and Disposition, of following those moral Commands or Imitations of God, which are Directions to that chiefest Good; or of the contrary Vice of not following them; which inevitably, with open and everlasting Distinction, plunges into the greatest Evil. They are the *ultimate*, therefore most capital Motives that govern and controul the lesser inferior ones of Life; to poise the Desires, and to balance the Passions that are engaged about the subordinate Means and Ends, the Things of this Life, by *setting the Affection upon Things above*; living not by Sight but *Faith* in another World, as it is open'd and revealed to the Christian, who has those *exceeding great and precious Promises* made over

over to him on purpose, to make him *Partaker* CHAP. XVI. *of the Divine Nature*; that seeing his Duty is incorporated into and animated by his Interest, it might the sooner take root in his indigent Nature, and cause it to grow up from less to greater Perfection, from a human to a Divine Nature. Every subordinate End is a Motive to the Use of the Means subservient to that End; and when these subordinate Ends are not pursued as ultimate resting Places, but progressive to the *great* End, then they are duly influenced and regulated by it. And when the Influence of these Motives operates in Conjunction with the Means, Aids, Helps, and Instruments mentioned in this Treatise, the happy Issue is eternal Life.





## CHAP. XVII.

## Of HELPS and INSTRUMENTS.

**B**Y these I mean the *Ministration* of the *Word* and *Sacraments* in the publick Worship of God thro' the *Mediator*. Wherein, especially, the *Ministry* are ordain'd under him as **HELPERS** of the Faith, *Co-workers with God*, and of all the Virtues flowing from it; and to continue *publick INSTRUMENTS* of the Salvation of Souls, as faithful *Stewards* of the Mysteries of Godliness; if not *Ambassadors*, as the Author of *Character*, Vol. III. pag. 336, describes, at least, *Curates* under the great Shepherd, the People's Servants for the Shepherd's sake; or, in a few Words, the *appointed* surviving *Be-seechers* of Men, in *Christ's* stead, to be reconciled to God, to the End of the World.

As we are *sociable* Creatures, and the Intention of Society is mutual Assistance in common Good; Society in the Worship of God, the *greatest* common Good, is pointed out by Nature, as the supreme Desire and Concern; and therefore *positively* commanded and directed of God as his rightful Tribute and our own greatest Benefit. For as *Society* has a great and natural Influence upon all our Actions, and

and Passions \*, so has it likewise in our religious Worship. And as Happiness is the End of Society, jointly and severally; and Religion the supreme Means of that Happiness; enjoining Obedience to the Civil Laws upon a good Conscience towards Men, and supplying the unavoidable Defects of those Laws from ever varying Circumstances, from the never changing *good Conscience towards God*; which infuses *inward Honesty*, and *secret Integrity* and Goodness in performing all the *relative Duties*: It becomes the Duty of every Member of the Society to recognize that *Religion*, *publickly*, and frequently, as Opportunity serves; as ever he pretends to be a sincere Promoter of the publick Happiness, or his own.

THE *forsaking the assembling ourselves together, as the Manner of some is*, is therefore justly assign'd as the Beginning, and continuing Cause of *Apostasy* from the Faith, and Practice of *Christianity*, and their own Happiness: And of that *wilful*, most provoking, complicated Sin, of falling off from the Truth after they have received the Knowledge of it; *treading under Foot the Son of God, counting his sanctifying saving Blood of the New Covenant an unholy, despicable Thing; and doing despite to the Spirit of Grace.* And that

\* Lord Bacon observes, "it is one of the greatest Secrets of Nature, that Mens Passions are capable of being rais'd to higher Degrees in Company, than in Solitude; and that we sooner grieve, fear, rejoice, love, admire, when we behold many others so moved, than when we are alone." And consequently they who would have the best Subjects, and be secure from the ill Effects of their *irregular* Passions, should take due care that the *best* Objects of Love and all the other Passions be publickly administred, and regularly impressed upon the Assemblies of their People.

CHAP. XVII. is no less in the Event, than wilfully delivering themselves up to an Incapacity of receiving any Benefit from the *Sacrifice for Sin*, offer'd up by the Mediator; and running themselves into the *forest Punishment* and *fiery Indignation* which shall devour the *Adversaries* of Christ, *Heb. x. 25, &c.* As to the Neglect and Contempt of these Things, the *Day*, *Place*, the *Affair transacting*, the *Persons officiating* \*.

CAN any thing be more reasonable than for every one of us in our own Persons (for there is no such thing as Proxy in the Worship of God) to assemble together, and provoke one another to that eternal good Work of paying Homage, in common, to the good and great Benefactor of our common Mercies and Blessings, and to take the Provocation so from one another, as to imitate with a godly Zeal? We are so framed by Nature, and so affianced by Likeness and Love of Society, as to be very influenceable to act as we see others, especially Numbers act; making that the very Argument for so doing: To be sure, it is so in respect of Evil; and ought it not to be so in the better Application of that Influence to that which is *Good*? How ready should the lukewarm Christian be to come into the Courts of the Lord, to warm his Devotion at the fervour of other People's; and, if there is but one Righteous in the Congregation, to gain to himself the Advantage of mixing his dubious, with the others availing Prayers? Besides, it contributes the most of any thing, to satisfy the Publick, who cannot see the Heart, that they,

\* See the *Bishop of Lond.* Past. pag. 42 to 53, which is in so many Hands as an excellent *Preservative*.

who

who frequent the publick Worship, do indeed CHAP. XVII. put on the Face and Appearance of some Conscience; for that is the Way of giving Pledges to one another, in Conjunction with other good Behaviour which should flow from that Fountain of a good Profession of it, that we have indeed some Conscience to, and Fear of that God, who overlooks our Duty to one another with his future Calling us to Account. If it is the Voice of Nature and the common Decree of Mankind, that Publick Honour is due to God, and is to be paid by Publick Worship of him; and God has appointed a certain *Time*, and some certain *Place* for that Payment, he that customarily and deliberately disregards either of them, may well be look'd upon as a prophane Refuser of that Honour, Denyer of that Payment, and Contemner of that God who has commanded the Thing, the Time, and Place; tho' outward Ordinances are of no avail before him, unless inward Religion, the Thing pointed to by them, grows out of them; *the Temple of the Lord* being expressly appointed to *amend our Ways*, and *our Doings*; yet Internal Religion must be as regularly nurtur'd by suitable Outward Religion as a Plant is by Rain, or the Stomach by the Mouth, in order to the Continuance of the Life, the Circulation, the Growth in Virtue, and the Favour of God.

THEY must therefore be Enthusiasts as to the Good of Society, or Atheists as to Religion, who forsake the Assembling themselves together upon account of so much Good to the Publick in general, and to every Individual of it. They are either so full of God, that they don't care how publickly they disvalue him; or else have

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so



CHAP. XVII. *so little* of him and Consideration, that they are equally void of natural, as they are of reveal'd Religion. However they may please themselves, and deceive others in talking about natural Religion, if they make a Conscience of refraining from publick Worship in every Community; the Inference is very plain, that either they have no Conscience at all, or else a very mischievous one. For pretending to the End without the Means, which both natural and reveal'd Religion points out to be ordinarily necessary for obtaining that End, is the extreme of Irreligion, as well as want of publick Spirit.

IT pleased God in his great Wisdom to lay down only *general* Rules for Observance in Mens Association in his Worship; as an Opportunity *design'd* and *given* from Heaven, for Men to exercise their Christian Charity in judging of one another, in their Judgment and Choice, which are the *best*, of the *Circumstantials* attendant upon the several Parts of Worship, by that Prudence in forting, and Discretion in fitting what best suits and promotes the Ends, *i. e.* the greatest Reverence and Honour of God, and the best Edification of the Worshippers, in all Godliness, Honesty, and Peace.

AND as *Liberty* duly regarding those most valuable Ends is ever to be *protected*; so Liberty officiously offering itself *contrariant* to those Ends is ever to be restrained. And because of this subsisting Liberty, there arises the Necessity of *Government*: And that Government shews itself to be *best* adjusted to those Ends, when it indulges and strengthens that Liberty, which watches over those Ends, as its unalienable Right, and checks

CHAP. XVII. checks that which deviates from the same, as making a false Pretence to Right. For the Object of all *true* valuable religious Liberty is the aforesaid true and valuable Good in publick Worship; and that which would depart from it, is not Liberty, but Licentiousness, tending to Confusion, and to all the Mischief that can arise from dangerous Mistakes, or at least, a dangerous opposing Zeal, in Things confessedly *indifferent* in their own Nature, where Moderation of Zeal should always keep its Station: But after they have gain'd the Stamp of publick Authority in any Country, the Scale of Indifferency certainly turns to the *Side* of Authority, and should always secure the greater Respect, if not an universal Compliance.

As to *publick Worship* of the Deity, I shall produce the *Religion of Nature delin.* "A Man, "says that Author, may be consider'd as a "Member of *Society*, and as *such*, he ought "to worship God, (if he has the Opportunity "of doing it: If there are proper Prayers used "publickly, which they may resort to; and his "Health, &c. permit.) Or the Society may "be consider'd as *one Body* that has common "Interests and Concerns, and as *such* is oblig'd "to worship the Deity, and offer one common "Prayer. Beside, there are many, who know "not of themselves *how* to pray, perhaps cannot so much as read. These too must be "taken as *they are*, and consequently some Time "and Place, *appointed*, where they may have "suitable Prayers read to them, and be guided "in their Devotions. And further, toward "the keeping Mankind in order, it is *necessary* "there should be some Religion profess'd, and

CHAP. XVII. “even establish’d; which cannot be without  
 “some publick Worship. And were it not  
 “for that Sense of Virtue, which is *principally*  
 “preserv’d (so far as it is preserv’d) by na-  
 “tional *Forms* and *Habits* of Religion, Men  
 “would soon lose it *all*, run wild, prey upon  
 “one another, and do what else the worst of  
 “Savages do \*.”

IN regard of that Reproach and Contempt pour’d out so plentifully upon the *Persons officiating* in the publick Worship of these Nations, by the two Authors I have been animadverting upon, and others of their Stamp; instead of entering into a Defence of the *Ministry*, I congratulate them, upon the sensible Pleasure and Honour they continue to do us, by the abusive Persecution of their Tongues, and Pens. Especially because it is a genuine Sample so honourably and sincerely consistent with their boasted Principle of universal Benevolence †, which they constantly proclaim to be due to *all* Men, and yet as constantly shut out *Ecclesiasticks* of all Persuasions from any Benefit, or Title to it; as if they were worse than all Men in the Community, for taking an Employment upon them for the general Good. If Christianity in a Protestant Nation is a *Trade*, as some affirm, it is however a Trade between God and Man, of God’s own

\* *Religion of Nature delin.* p. 124.

† The Deists make the Whole of Religion to consist in *Benevolence*, or, as they vary the Phrase, *in doing as we wou’d be done by*; tho’ it manifestly is no more than one *Third* of the Religion of the End. They designedly leave out of their System, Duty to God, and Ourselves; and by that Device would make Religion and Civil Government, this World and the next, to be one and the same Thing.

erecting;

CHAP. XVII. erecting; and they who are Partners in that Trade have all the Profits, whilst the *Clerks* have no more than writing Wages and Attendance under the polite Appellations of the *black Tribe*, &c.\*

THE grand Traducer certainly owes them a Shame; they would never else be so much at his Service, as to lay aside all *Respect* to the Reader, and *seek* Occasion, and make it at every Turn, and almost in every Chapter, run out into Digression, in order to give *us* a Cast of their Benevolence; and by an egregious Imposition upon the Reader, constantly endeavouring to involve all Protestant Clergy under the Odium of *Papish Priestcraft*; from Instances of Misconduct only applicable to the latter: As if false, indiscriminate Accusation was neither Sin, nor Shame, nor any Seducement of the Judgment into Error and *Infidelity*.

THE *Religion of Nat. delin.* will assure them the contrary. “Among other Prejudices, there  
 “is one of a peculiar Nature, which you must  
 “have observ’d to be one of the *greatest* Causes  
 “of *modern Irreligion*. Whilst some Opinions  
 “and Rites are carried to such an immoderate  
 “Height, as exposes the Absurdity of them to  
 “the View of almost every body but them who  
 “raise them, not only Gentlemen of the *belles*  
 “*Lettres*, but even Men of common Sense,  
 “many times see through them; and then out  
 “of Indignation and an excessive Renitence,  
 “not separating that which is *true* from that  
 “which is *false*, they come to deny both, and

\* So the Author of the *Characteristicks* styles them.

“fall

CHAP. "fall back into the contrary Extreme, a Con-  
XVII. "tempt of all Religion in general." p. 60, 61.

IT is certainly our Honour, that such Men, resolving to continue what they are, count us their Enemies *for the work sake*, and express it so vehemently in Season and out of Season; because *we are not for their turn, we are clean contrary to their doings; we upbraid them with their offending the law, we object to their infamy the transgressing the true Oracles of Reason*, the sound certain Nature of Things, the Fountain of Truth and of Religion, and their perverse Usage of the Kindness of Heaven; therefore they look on us, only with malevolent Eyes, they speak of us every where, they treat us at all times with *despitefulness*, Wisd. xi. 12, 19. It is most certain, that *if we please such Men, we are not*, what we ought to be, *Servants of Christ*, Gal. i. 10. It is the strongest Proof that can be given, "the Confession of an Enemy," that we retain Integrity to our Master *Christ*, and are useful and necessary to the Support of his Religion; at the same time it is a ridiculous owning the Weakness of their own Objections against it, as often as they have recourse to such sorry Weapons.

"THE sacred Office can never be hurt by their Sayings, if it is not first reproached by our Doings." So long as the Ends and Uses of the Ministry duly observ'd, will assuredly establish and endear us to all Christians; so long we have nothing so much to disvalue, as the Calumny of these Haters of that Name; or to dread as their verbal, or written Praises: Their Commendation of *Particulars* means nothing more

more than a Signal to Companions of *their* re-CHAP.  
diness to betray his Cause, and go over to their XVI  
Designs of subverting it. We know whom we have believed, and are well apprised of our Reward, when Men speak evil of us *falsly* for his sake; therefore such Praise ought never to be counted of, because it can never proceed *à laudato Viro*: Consequently the Ministry have always the most valuable Effects, when we enjoy the Reverse of it. And, I really believe, nay, I prophesy, if they abate not of their Bigotry, they are so silly, as not to take care to disappoint us of that Encomium, *of our Enemies being found Liars against us*, and their Defamation our Merit; whilst we severally have the Consolation of knowing, *that the Reproaches of them that reproach Thee, O Christ, are fallen upon ME!* But let them know, the more they rage against us, the less they have to reply to our Arguments; and so the Cause and we triumph together over them.

BESIDES, what Advantage, what Alteration for the better has not the true Christian Religion imported to these Realms with respect to its Clergy, above those of *their* Religion, the old natural Religion once establish'd in these Nations? The *Druids* were invested with the Prerogative of adjudging Property, deciding all Controversies, distributing Rewards and Punishments; and they who did not submit to their Determinations were excommunicated from all Honours and Privileges, deprived of the Benefit of the Laws, and held in Abhorrence. *Cæsar's Comm. Lib. VI.* They have, 'tis true, no Abuse of *Holy Times*, or *Holy Offices* to answer for, because they are so impious as to have neither *Time, Person,*  
or

CHAP. or Office for publick Religion; whilst by Insincerity and Hypocrisy they blush not to defile the Honour and Name of *Gent.* in occasionally mixing with *Christian* Prayers recommended to Heaven in the Name of the *Mediator*, and partaking of *Sacraments* built upon him, in order to grasp the Civil Offices in Christian Countries. One thing we are very sure of, that they are sincere in their Enmity, and therefore safe from their Flattery.

BUT notwithstanding the Beam in their Eye, should they truly hit at a Mote in ours, it would be the greatest Prudence to pull it out immediately, and take away Occasion from them that seek it; we very well know the great Profit that is to be made of an Enemy and his Scurrility, according to the Advice of *Plutarch*, but more especially the suffering Precedents and Patterns from that Treatment in Christian Annals, making us the more circumspect to attain, and not fall short in some eminent Degree of the Religion of the End, whilst we ourselves are entrusted by God, and Man to accomplish, by our continual *Beseachings in Christ's stead*, the same End in others, thro' our intent Ministration of his Reasons, his Means, his Aids, his Motives to the furtherance of the same; considering that well known Maxim, *Malus Sacerdos de Sacerdotio suo crimen acquirit, non Dignitatem.*

THE Author of *Characteristicks*, if he was not so whimsically conceited\* in his Mistakes about the Nature of Things, might have known when he wrote his *Advice to an Author*, that the Use

\* An Epithet given him by *Philaleth. Lipsiens.*

and

and Necessity of publick Preaching arose from CHAP. the general Neglect of Mens recognizing themselves\*, and considering their main Scope, and End in the Occurrences of their Lives; for want of some proper impartial Person to hold out the Looking-Glass to give them the inward View of themselves†, and shew themselves to themselves as they stand accountable to their Maker and Redeemer; and to form the home Acquaintance with their Hearts, what manner of Persons they are, and ought to be; and to remove the Interest of Ambition, Avarice, Corruption, and every sly insinuating Vice as prevents this Interview‡, and to inspect and audit the false Opinions and Fancies that arise to the shaking the Constancy of the Will||; that by observing them, in time, they may gain a will, and insure themselves a certain Resolution; by which they shall know where to find themselves; be sure of their own Meaning and Design; and as to all their Desires, Opinions, and Inclinations, be warranted one and the same Person to-day as yesterday, and to-morrow as to-day: And that Appetite, the elder Brother of Reason, on every Contest, may not take the Advantage of drawing all to his own Side‡, seeing the Imaginations and Fancies on his Side discover themselves mere Sophisters and Impostors, who have not the least to do with the Party of Reason, and good Sense\*.

Now seeing this Knowledge of ourselves, and Examination of our State, by the Tendency of our Thoughts and Actions, and the Correction and Amendment of what is amiss, is so gene-

\* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 170.

† *Ibid.* pag. 171.

‡ *Ibid.* pag. 172, 173.

|| *Ibid.* pag. 185.

‡ *Ibid.*

pag. 187.

\* *Ibid.* pag. 188.

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CHAP. rally neglected, as his *Advice* supposes; instead  
XVII. of superseding, as he intended \*, this helps to  
establish an Order of *Preachers*, and to recom-  
mend their useful Service.

FOR are they not incumbent upon that very thing in Publick, to bring Men to know, and inspect themselves, by the Help of that true Knowledge which came down from Heaven, to give them the true Insight and Emendation of themselves, as deriving from the same Source whence came the Frame and Fabrick of their Being? And do they not in the *domestick* Presence of God, and Christ, hold out that recognizing edifying *Mirrou* to the Face of the Congregation, that every one by the Reflection may see himself for himself (not his Neighbour) what manner of Person he is; and *instruct, reprove, correct*, according to the Tenor and Directions of the same; that every one giving their constant Attendance, *may be thoroughly furnish'd to all good Works*? And do they not moreover *befeech Men in Christ's stead*, the great Teacher of all Righteousness, both of the Religion of the End, and of the Means; who open'd the Way to the Favour of God, and came down from Heaven to establish all the efficacious Means for surely conducting all Believers thither, *to be reconciled to God* and to their own Happiness; and constantly pursue that End, in the constant use of the appointed Means? Do they not labour in that very Thing, in beseeching Men in the Bowels of Love to be reconciled to God; and, as they are adopted, to become therefore obedient Children in Christ. *Thus saith the Lord*, and thus echo his Labourers, *have I not*

\* *Charact.* Vol. I. pag. 167, 174.

*pray'd*

CHAP. *pray'd you as a Father his Sons, as a Mother her Daughters, and a Nurse her young Babes, that ye would be my People, as I am your God, that ye should be my Children, and I be your Father,* 2 Esd. i. 28. And do they not labour in distinguishing, directing, and applying the Means, to the accomplishing the Ends? And shew the Sophistry of the deluding Pleasures, Honours, Profits of this World; the Deceitfulness of Sin; the Devices of Satan; the Honesty and Simplicity of Virtue; the Integrity of fearing and loving God, and keeping his Commandments; and of believing likewise in the *Mediator*, and honouring him; and of doing no despite to the *Spirit of Grace*, but concur with his Assistance; and faithfully persevere to respect those as the faithful true Friends of their infallible Happiness, pointing out to Christians sojourning in this World all the *true* Pleasures, Honours, Profits of it; and immensely greater in that which is to come?

AND if, in the nature of things, and successive Experience of the World, there will always be most need of improving and encouraging that second Degree of Wisdom, *of following good Advice*, which is to supply in the Conduct of Men the (generally absent) first Degree of Wisdom of doing always what is right and good of *oneself*; and if there will always be Ignorance of saving Truth and religious Obligation in the *growing* Generation; *Mistakes* about Religion in very many; *Heedlessness* of the great concern in multitudes; and *Forgetfulness* of duty in all, even the most knowing, even in Protestant Countries; and that will continue as long as Christians are Men, incumber'd with *Body*, diverted with the  
Hurry

CHAP. XVII. *Hurry of secular care, and entangled with the Love, the deceitful Charms of false Happiness in their Pursuit of earthly Things, besides various other Hindrances of Religion; and as long as Men have, by Nature, an Appetite for, and a Relish to some Spice of Novelty, in the Enjoyment of the most substantial Things that belongs to their Sustenance; I mean also of old salutary Truths, under new Lights and Representations making their Address in the varying Language of every Age; so long the Necessity of publick Preaching will continue from Generation to Generation, in the Christian World. If a Deuteronomy in the Mosaick Law, and a second Epistle of an Apostle (2 Pet. i.) were necessary for explaining, and putting in Remembrance those things already known to Christians, in the Truth whereof they are already establish'd; the Rehearsal of those Scriptures, and upon that Rehearsal, bringing known Truths present to the Mind, explaining, enforcing, and beseeching according to Times and Seasons, Needs and Occasions, will be perpetually necessary to the Coming of Christ; and this doing the Work of an Evangelist, and making full Proof of the Ministry, necessarily requiring regular Appointment of, and Subordination in the same, will likewise in every Country, more or less, continue different Orders, Degrees, and Dignities. If they are not now the supporting Pillars of Truth, in the Household of Faith and Building of God, they are at least the Pilasters of it, both Useful, and Ornamental.*

I CONCLUDE this Head, with applicable Passages out of the learned Dean *Prideaux*. "As the Jews had their Synagogues in  
" which

CHAP. XVI. "which the Law and the Prophets were read  
" unto them every Sabbath; so the Christians  
" had their Churches, in which from the Beginning all the Doctrines and Duties of their  
" Religion were every Lord's Day taught, inculcated, and explain'd unto them. And by  
" God's Blessing upon this Method chiefly was  
" it, that this holy Religion still bore up against  
" all Oppressions, and notwithstanding the ten  
" Persecutions, and all other Artifices and Methods of Cruelty and Oppression, which Hell  
" and Heathenism could devise to suppress it,  
" grew up and increased under them; which  
" Julian the Apostate was so sensible of, that  
" when he put all his Wits to work to find out  
" new Methods for the restoring the Heathen  
" Impiety, he could not think of any more  
" effectual for this Purpose, than to employ his  
" Philosophers to preach it up every Week to  
" the People in the same Manner, as the  
" Ministers of the Gospel did the Christian Religion. And had it not pleas'd God to cut  
" him off before he could put this Design in  
" Execution, it is to be fear'd his Success herein  
" would in a great Measure have answer'd what  
" he propos'd by it. But to Christians above  
" all others this must have been of the greatest  
" Benefit. For the Doctrines of our holy Religion having in them the sublimest Principles  
" of divine Knowledge, and the Precepts of  
" it containing all the Duties of Morality in the  
" highest Manner improv'd, nothing can be of  
" greater Advantage to us for the leading us to  
" the truest Happiness we are capable of, as  
" well in this Life as in that which is to come,  
" than to have these weekly taught and explain'd unto us, and weekly put home upon  
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“ our Conscience for the forming our Lives according to them. And the Political State or Civil Government of every Christian Country is no less benefited thereby, than the Church itself. For as it best conduceth to keep up the Spirit of Religion among us, and to make every Man know his Duty to God, his Neighbour, and Himself; so it may be reckon'd of all Methods the most conducive to preserve Peace and good Order in the State. For hereby Subjects are taught to be obedient to their Prince and his Laws, Children to be dutiful to their Parents, Servants to be faithful to their Masters, and all to be just and charitable, and pay all other Duties, which in every Relation they owe to each other. And in the faithful Discharge of these Duties doth the Peace, good Order, and Happiness of every Community consist. And to be weekly instructed in these Duties, and to be weekly excited to the Obedience of them, is certainly the properest and most effectual Method to induce Men hereto. And it may justly be reckoned that the good Order, which is now maintain'd in this Kingdom, is more owing to this Method, than to any other now in Practice among us for this End; and that one good Minister by his weekly Preaching and daily good Example, sets it more forward than any two of the best Justices of the Peace can, by their exactest Diligence in the Execution of the Laws which they are entrusted with. For these by the utmost of their Coercions can go no farther, than restrain the outward Acts of Wickedness; but the other reforms the Heart within, and removes all those evil Inclinations of it, from whence

“ they

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“ they flow. And it is not to be doubted, but that if this Method was once dropp'd among us, the Generality of the People, whatever else may be done to obviate it, would in seven Years time relapse into as bad a State of Barbarity, as was ever in Practice among the worst of our *Saxon* and *Danish* Ancestors. And therefore supposing there was no such thing in Truth and Reality, as that Holy Christian Religion, which the Ministers of the Gospel teach (as too many among us are now permitted with Impunity to say) yet the Service they do the Civil Government, in keeping all Men to those Duties, in the Observance of which its Peace, good Order and Happiness consist, may very well deserve the Maintenance which they receive from it \*.”

As long as Man is conscious of God, he is conscious of Religion to him, and that his Conduct in this World ought to be steer'd by that Compass to the Point of pleasing him. Therefore there are, as there ought to be, publick Explainers and Enforcers of that internal Compass of Action. Consequently the Conservators of, and Pleaders at the Tribunal of Conscience, are the sure Supporters of Civil Tribunals, by promoting Virtue, the Basis, and suppressing Vice, the Bane of Society, at the Root and Source; they ought to be acknowledg'd by all Men, that, doing their Duty, they are the best of Friends to Civil Government. How far they are the Conservators of Learning, whence so many Benefits flow to the Publick, is left to others to report. Nay, of so great Help to Piety,

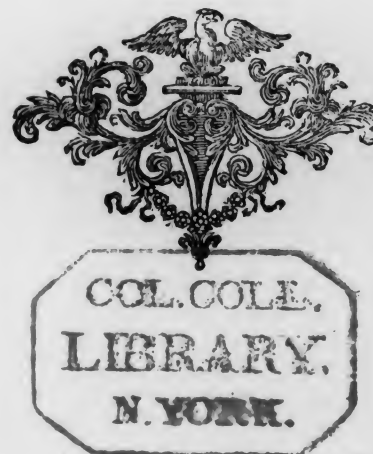
\* *Connection*, Part I. pag. 390, 391.

CHAP. XVII. Virtue, and the Furtherance of every Duty, is the Ministry in their *weekly* Ministrations, (tho' the *Deists* malign the Service, and would preclude the Publick from that Benefit) that they have been able to effect that *Reformation*, which inspired Prophets, with all their Threatnings back'd with a Power of *Miracles*, could not bring to pass, according to another Observation of the same truly judicious Author. "If it be examin'd into, says he, how it came to pass, that the *Jews* were so prone to *Idolatry* before the *Babylonish* Captivity, and so strongly and cautiously, even to Superstition, fixed against it after that Captivity, the true reason thereof will appear to be, that they had the Law and the Prophets every Week constantly read unto them after that Captivity, which they had not before; for before that Captivity, they having no Synagogues for publick Worship, or publick Instruction, nor any Places to resort to for either, unless the Temple at *Jerusalem*, or the Cities of the *Levites*, or to the Prophets, when God was pleased to send such among them; for want hereof, great Ignorance grew among the People: God was little known among them, and his Laws, in a manner, wholly forgotten. And therefore, as occasions offer'd, they were easily drawn into all the Superstitious and Idolatrous Usages of the neighbouring Nations, that liv'd round about them, till at length, for the Punishment hereof, God gave them up to a dismal Destruction in the *Babylonish* Captivity. But after that Captivity, and the Return of the *Jews* from it, Synagogues being erected among them in every City, to

" which

" which they constantly resorted to publick CHAP. XVII.  
 " Worship, and where every Week they had  
 " the Law from the first, and after that from  
 " the time of *Antiochus's* Persecution, the Pro-  
 " phets also read unto them, were by Sermons  
 " and Exhortations there delivered, at least  
 " every Sabbath, instructed in their Duty,  
 " and excited to the Obedience of it; this  
 " kept them in a thorough Knowledge of  
 " God and his Laws \*."

\* *Idem.* Part. I. Lib. VI.



L 3

CHAP.





## CHAP. XVIII.

*Of the permanent Efficacy, and Obligation  
of FAITH in the MEDIATOR.*

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**S**EEING then, in fine, that the *Mediator* was appointed of God upon the Fall of Man, as the Foundation of the new Covenant of Obedience, and all his future Mercies unto him, and the Fountain of his Remedy and Recovery ; being the Import of that never-failing Promise of subduing the Enemy of his Happiness, and of impartially blessing all the Nations upon Earth ; and the original Ground of that diffusive fundamental Principle of Natural Religion, *That he is a Rewarder of those that diligently seek to please him* : And that, in due time, after several Renewals of that saving Promise, some good Preparation of the Knowledge of God, and of ourselves in our lapsed Condition was imparted from Heaven with a long Series of Prophecy, connected to the critical Time of Expectation ; he came into the World and manifested himself in our Flesh ; and re-establish'd the *Religion of the End*, the original Law of our Nature in the three Branches specified, and not only re-afferted its Obligation from the general Corruption it was fallen under in Theory, and Practice ; but improved our Knowledge in many Particulars, to the Conviction,

tion, or at least Admiration of all acquainted with it ; and not only taught a perfect Rule of Manners, but perfectly obey'd it ; and to his divine Life added innumerable Miracles to prove himself the *Son of God*, sent from his Father, the Father of all our Mercies, to give Life and Efficacy to the languishing and utterly dishearten'd *Religion of the Means*, Repentance and Prayer ; by dying a Propitiation for our Sins ; rising from the Dead ; ascending to the right Hand of God a perpetual Intercessor for us : And further, to enlighten those natural Means of sinful Men, and fasten the Engagement of the new Covenant, and perpetuate those Benefits, and incorporate them into our Constitution, to retrieve the decaying Impression, and rivet them into our Body and Soul, he instituted *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper* ; and moreover procured to our Prayers in his Name, a new *internal Assistance* to our enfeebled Faculties ; and brought the Authority of God and himself over us to light, by bringing the Rewards and Punishments of his Laws to light, and to the Assurance of his Disposal of them at the last Day ; and instituted Helps and Instruments for the Administration of these Things, as we are sociable as well as accountable Creatures. And if this Mediator, *Christ the Lord*, rules, presides, directs, and animates all these Things to the Glory of God the Father, now, and to the End of the World ; then, as the true Light that came into the World, a *Law-giver* of them severally, *able to save, and destroy*, he might well enact to the Consciences of all Men, to whom these Presents and Blessings of his Gospel shall come, *Ye believe in God, believe also in ME* \*.

\* *John xiv.*

L 4

How

CHAP. XVIII. How suitable to him, and gracious to us is that Character of him in the Volume of the Book, i. e. *The Author and Finisher of our Faith?* Heb. xii. 2.

THUS should Christ dwell in our Hearts by FAITH, so as to be able to say with his Apostle, *The Life that I now live in the Flesh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me* \*, *whom having not seen we love; and in whom tho' now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory* †. And this shews the true Sublime of those Expressions; *he desired to know nothing but JESUS CHRIST, and him CRUCIFIED* ‡: for such a Death, tho' the great Scandal at first of a Saviour that could not save himself, a stumbling Block to the Jews, and to Greeks Foolishness; yet, with Respect to its inestimable Benefits, and the Methods of God in baffling the Devil, and giving Life to the World that way, is in that very Circumstance, preach'd and proclaim'd by him, to be *the Power of God and the Wisdom of God*; and therefore the Glory †, as it is the Basis of his Religion; and that Foolishness of God in the Eye of the Greek was wiser than any of their Philosophers, in Deeds and Doctrines, to make wise unto Salvation †. The Death of the Mediator being founded in the Nature of the best Government of God over sinful Man, is the true Sublime of Divine Government, therefore the Apostle might well place all his Glory, and consign all his Eloquence to it; being so much *the Demonstration of the Spirit, and of the Power* of all Superior, Divine, and therefore of all Human Reason.

\* Gal. ii. 20.

† 1 Pet. i. 8.

‡ 1 Cor. iv. 2.

† Gal. iv. 14.

† 1 Cor. ii. 4.

AND

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AND elsewhere he accounts all Things as *Loss* in Comparison of the transcendent Gain of the *Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus* \*. For the incomparable Excellency of it consists in making wise unto Salvation; by *first* discovering and enlightning the right Ends, and likewise the only true Means, of that true Religion of Man, that is acceptable to God; and *secondly* directing how to apply the Means for the accomplishing the End. A Man may be knowing in the End, and also in the Means, but he is *wise* as to neither of them, nor has any Title to the Character of Wisdom (which is constantly the complex Idea of a moral Agent applying the proper Means to the End he has pitch'd upon, suppose his own Happiness in this Life, and the next) till he has accordingly begun and persevered to apply the Means agreeable to their Nature and Design, to the Furtherance of that chosen End. And this is the Business and the very Affair of this admirable Faith with Mankind; which is therefore said to *abound to us ward in all WISDOM and PRUDENCE* †: This is the Divine Glory and Guidance, invaluable Comfort and Assurance of the *Light*, the *Way*, and the *Truth* that came into the World to lead Men to Heaven and Happiness.

THIS Belief, *tam necessitate Medii quam Præcepti*, is, without Controversy, the leading, animating Article, and most concerning Truth of the Gospel (supposing the Belief of a God) the Corner-Stone whereon we build our Name and Discipleship, and the Reason of the thence re-

\* 1 Phil. iii. 8.

† Eph. i. 8.

sulting

CHAP. XVIII. Obligation why we ought to shew ourselves, a *peculiar People zealous of good Works*. This the good Christian Tree that bears the good Fruit of Christian Works; and we are order'd to make and preserve that Tree good, as it was first planted, and improve it in its Growth, in order to produce its Fruit in due Goodness and Quantity. If no Tree, no real acceptable Fruit; if corrupt, the Fruit can be no better\*; and where it is sometimes, without Fruit, or at other times the Fruit withereth and falleth off, it is *twice* dead, plucked up by the Root†. This is the *Foundation or Covenant of God, that standeth sure, having this Seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his: and let him that nameth the Name of Christ depart from Iniquity.*

THERE are two most dangerous and degenerate Extremes relating to this most amiable and beneficial Faith. One is of those, who place all Religion in the End, without any, or without sufficient Regard to the appointed Means, thinking there is no Religion, Necessity, or very little Use of them.

THE other is of those, who either place all, or the most of their Christianity in resting in, with a Judgment and Zeal confin'd to the Means, without any, or without due Reference to the End they were purposely ordain'd to produce; foolishly rating and esteeming them more necessary and valuable than the End they were subservient to. This Extreme produces great Variety of Errors and Mistakes, more or less,

\* *Matth. xii. 33.*

† *2 Jude 12.*

injurious

injurious to the Christian Life. One makes a good Foundation to be the whole Building, without superstrucing what is required upon it; the other builds without a Foundation. The latter over-values and mistakes the Design of Faith, making the Means separate from the End to be *all* the Yoke of Christ; the former undervalues and supercedes it, by placing *all* in the End independent of the other. And therefore one and the other are manifest Deviations from the true Christian Religion; which is therefore true, because it requires them *both*, and hath connected the Means to the End, and commanded one for the furtherance of the other. And each of them are a notorious putting asunder what God and Christ, his Gospel and the Reason of Things have join'd together in great Wisdom and Prudence.

My present Concern is with the first Extreme. And for the Conviction of those, who retain such pernicious Opinions, I propose to shew the Religion and Necessity of *this Faith*, in order to incite Endeavours for good Works in the Performance of the Religion of the End; and to point the Way how to gain Acceptance with God for such Endeavours, that Way, as have been hitherto form'd independent, or rather in contempt of that Faith. The NECESSITY of which Faith I would be always understood to mean, as confin'd to those Places where the Gospel is sufficiently *promulged* to those who are to act upon it. This I shall do, after I have first answered the remaining Objections of the Rejecters and Undervaluers of this Faith.

I HAVE

I HAVE already shewn, in proper Place, the Wisdom and the Love of God in appointing a Mediator, and his great Love and Condescension in offering himself, and coming into the World; and that the Basis of this Mediatorship (since it is revealed) is, to the Admiration of all intelligent Beings in the World, solidly and most effectually built in *the Nature of Things*, by the personal Union of the Divine, and Human Nature; for impartially consulting the Interest of each, and making a perfect Reconciliation between God and Man; by giving the World a new Transcript of the Divine Will, after it had been obliterated and neglected, stamping it with the Authority of God, and facilitating the conveying it, by degrees, into the Hands of every body; by dying for the Sins of Men; and interceding for their Pardon and for all Blessings, upon Newness of Life. I have set forth the Profusion of the Wisdom and Goodness of God, in the Death of the Mediator, and shewn the Weakness of the Exceptions to that Method of God's pardoning and saving Sinners. And likewise the true Use, and Design of Baptism, and the Lord's-Supper, the *two Positives*, as they are called, of Christianity; That one is a fœderal Initiation and Engagement, to have always a faithful Regard both to the Religion of the Means, and of the End, and to apply one to the Promotion of the other; and the other Sacrament is a frequent invigorating Recruit of the otherwise languishing Dispositions and Resolutions of the Mind, towards each of them. And in answering the Objections, I clear'd the Divine Appointment from the Imputation of Arbitrariness and mere Will, which vanishes as soon as the

the religious Use and Tendency appears. I have likewise made it appear, that all Parts of Human Nature are consulted and assisted in their moral Disorders by the healing Methods of the great Physician of Souls; the Understanding, Will, Memory, and Affections by the *internal Aids*, prospering and giving Increase to the Application of the *Helps and Instruments* to those Powers, in publick Worship. And as bodily Affections after false Happiness chiefly sway and seduce the Man, I have particularly shewn their design'd Balance, and religious Controul, from the Motives of true Gain and Loss; Happiness and Misery, the Rewards and Punishments of a future Life, in the Re-union of both Parts of our Nature, Body and Soul; and that the affected Neglect of future Rewards in the Authors I have been answering, is an artificial, real Subversion of Natural Religion as well as Revealed.

THERE remain some Objections, which I proceed to consider. 1. Is of *Mystery*; which the Author of *Christianity as old, &c.* treats as an *Inconsistency, errant Jumble\**, *Orthodox Paradoxes†*, *absurd, contradictory‡*, *sacred Nonsense*——“to suppose it dark and mysterious in *any Part*, is “to represent it as unworthy of having God for its Author‡.

### I. Of the Mystery of Faith.

ALL those spiteful Accusations of the Rejecters and Diminishers of the Christian Faith will soon vanish, if such Readers, to whom this Answer is address'd, will be so fair as to look

\* Pag. 74. † Pag. 183. ‡ Pag. 198. § Pag. 199.  
into



CHAP. XVIII. into the New Testament, they will plainly see their own Mistakes, and as plainly find that Christianity is, in itself, entirely clear of those Imputations; and that they ought to ask God's, and all Christian People's Pardon for such unjust Calumny. And, because this reviling is so very frequent, and injurious to the true Purport and Design of the *real* Mystery, I shall endeavour in the Spirit of Meekness to convince them of it. It will be requisite in the first Place to give the plain Sense and Importance of the Word as it occurs in the Scripture, (1.) In all the particular Passages: (2.) In the general Meaning and Idea resulting from them.

FIRST, it occurs and is applied to various Things, twenty-six times, in the Singular, or Plural Number. To the Delivery of Doctrine in Parables; whence the Teachable might learn enough, whilst the Incurable were taught in a manner they deserv'd, and was at the same time least prejudicial to the Publisher\*. To Types and Symbols †. To Iniquity †: Even in St. Paul's Days some began to corrupt the Gospel, and shew themselves, *in part*, Perverters of its Design of Godliness, unto Iniquity. To some particular Doctrine of the Gospel, explain'd only *in part*; as the Resurrection of the Body ‡; the Manifestation of the Son of God in the Flesh †; the Calling and Conversion of the *Jews*, when the Fulness of the Gentiles is come in §. To the speaking Things in an unknown Tongue †; which was, contrary to the Design of the Gospel,

\* *Matth.* xiii. 11. *Mark* iv. 11. *Luke* viii. 10. † *Eph.* v. 32. *Rev.* i. 20. & *alibi.* † *Thef.* ii. 7. † *1 Cor.* xv. 51. † *1 Tim.* iii. 16. § *Rom.* xi. 25. † *1 Cor.* xiv. 2.

concealing

concealing them utterly and totally. To the CHAP. XVIII. Doctrines of Christianity in general †.

IN many Places it imports the Revelation of the Gospel and Preaching of Christ (whereon all the other Mysteries of Christianity depend) as a Thing *before* secret, unknown, and hid, but afterwards revealed and made manifest to *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*. According to the Revelation of the Mystery which was kept secret since the World began, but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the Prophets according to the Commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all Nations for the Obedience of the Faith\*. We speak the Wisdom of God in a Mystery, even the bidden Wisdom which God ordained before the World †. In whom [the Beloved, Jesus Christ] we have Redemption thro' his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins according to the Riches of his Grace wherein he hath abounded towards us in all Wisdom and Prudence, having made known unto us the Mystery of his Will according to his good Pleasure †. By Revelation he made known unto me the Mystery (as I wrote afore in few Words, [recited from chap. i. 7, 8, 9. just before] whereby when ye read ye may understand MY KNOWLEDGE in the Mystery of Christ, [i. e. Redemption thro' his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins, the Mystery of God's Will in Christ, chap. i. 7—9.] which in other Ages was not made known unto the Sons of Men, as it is now revealed unto his holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be Fellow-heirs ‡ to make all Men SEE, φωτίσαι πάντας, illuminate ALL, a Word also

† *1 Cor.* iv. 1. — xiii. 2. *1 Tim.* iii. 9: \* *Rom.* xvi. 25, 26. † *1 Cor.* xi. 7. † *Eph.* i. 7, 8. † — iii. 3, 4, 5, 6.

often

CHAP. often used to express Baptism (*vid. Suicer.*  
XVIII. *Theſaur.*) *what is the Fellowship, [or with some*  
Copies *διανομία* Dispensation] *of the Mystery,*  
*which from the beginning of the World hath been*  
*hid in God \*.* *That utterance may be given unto*  
*me, that I may open my Mouth boldly, to MAKE*  
*KNOWN thy Mystery of the Gospel †.* *To fulfil*  
*the Word of God, even the Mystery which*  
*hath been hid from Ages and from Generations, but*  
*now is made MANIFEST to his Saints: To whom*  
*God would make known what is the Riches of the*  
*Glory of this Mystery among the Gentiles; which*  
*is Christ in you, the Hope of Glory ‖.* *That their*  
*Hearts might be comforted, being knit together in*  
*love, and unto all Riches of the FULL ASSU-*  
*RANCE of understanding to the Acknowledgement*  
*of the Mystery of God, and of the Father, and of*  
*Christ; in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wis-*  
*dom and Knowledge ‡, praying that God would open*  
*unto us a Door of Utterance, to speak the Mystery*  
*of Christ — That I may make it manifest, as I*  
*OUGHT to speak §.*

THE Author of *Wisd.* (vi. 22.) gives an Idea  
of Mystery, as a Thing not hid, but disclosed,  
so far as the Truth is requisite: *As for Wisdom*  
*what she is, and how she came, I will tell you,*  
*and will not hide Mysteries from you: But will*  
*seek her out from the beginning of her Nativity, and*  
*bring the Knowledge of her into light, and will not*  
*pass over Truth.* And a judicious Author † has  
these Words to the Purpose; “The Mysteries  
“ of Religion were the Secrets of his [God’s]  
“ Will before they were revealed, but after

\* — *Ver.* 9. † — *vi.* 19. ‡ *Col.* i.  
25—28. § *iv.* 3, 4.  
† *Witchet. Sermon.* Vol. IV. pag. 306, 7.

“ they

“ they are told us, they cease to be Mysteries. CHAP.  
“ And it is no more a Mystery that God (in XVIII.  
“ and through Christ) will pardon Sin to all  
“ that repent if they have done amiss, than it  
“ is a Mystery that Man that is rational and in-  
“ telligent ought to live soberly, righteously,  
“ and godly: And I do understand it as well  
“ that I ought to repent, and believe the Gos-  
“ pel, as I understand that I ought to love and  
“ fear God. All Religion is now intelligible:  
“ The moral Part of it was intelligible from  
“ the Creation; that which is pure Revelation  
“ by the Gospel is intelligible ever since, and  
“ not a Mystery. Therefore we beseech our-  
“ selves to talk that Religion is not knowable  
“ and we can’t understand it: For understand  
“ it we may if we will; for if it is revealed,  
“ it is made intelligible; if not intelligible,  
“ it is not revealed.”

I HAVE produced all the Places where the  
Word is to be met with, excepting *Rev.* x. 7.  
— xvii. 5 — and 7. a Book I pretend not  
to understand the *whole* of, I am contented to  
think of it.

I. THAT it very much resembles the Na-  
ture of a Scripture-Mystery in general, *viz.*  
plain and intelligible, and so far good and  
profitable unto all, *in part*; whilst it is *partly*  
otherwise at present: Thus a great many practi-  
cal useful Truths are interspers’d, agreeing with  
other Scriptures; and being compared together,  
both receive and give profitable Interpretation,  
intelligible unto Godliness: In that respect, *blef-*  
*sed is he that readeth, and they that hear, and*  
*keep those things that are written therein.*

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2. As it is stiled a *Prophecy*, chap. i. 3. there begin the *δυσνόητα*, Things hard to be understood. The like St. Peter himself acknowledged of the *Prophetick* part of St. Paul's Epistles, relating to the End of the World: Those are the *some* Things hard to be understood in his Writings, or rather in that *Prophetick* part of them. And how should it be otherwise when *no Prophecy* is open and plain to the private Understanding or *Interpretation* of him who wrote the Words, but to the *Holy Ghost*, who inspired them to be explain'd by future Events. It may be observ'd that the great Design of it is, to represent in a Scheme, or Assemblage of Figures of *Things* rather than of Words, the mysterious untraceable Ways of the *Alpha* and *Omega* of all Things, in the Providences and Dispensations observable in the Government of the Church. But whereas it is told us by God, and must be confessed by all Men, that they are not wholly to be solv'd by us, at present, it is by so much the more proper, elegant, sublime, and instructive to represent the *unsearchable* Part of the Divine Government in *Types* and *Symbols*, equally dark and *enigmatical*; and in that Respect, how plainly may we understand what the Vision affirms of itself? chap. xix. 9. *These are the true Sayings of God*, xxi. 5. *Write, for these Words are true and faithful*. xxii. 6.

MEAN time, that part of the Divine Economy, which concerns our Duty, is very clear, and no less important. As similar Causes will have similar Effects to the End of the World, and those Effects will constantly meet with Protection

tection, or Chastisement from the supreme Head of the Church in Heaven, the Lord of all; his seven Epistles to the *seven Churches*, will be a *Memorial* to all Ages. For it is very remarkable, that the Commendations, Threatnings, and Encouragements to those Churches, *ch. ii. and iii.* turn upon and are annex'd to the Ends of Religion or Deviations from them, *viz.* the *Eight Beatitudes*, and the only true religious Means of attaining them, *viz.* Faith in Christ, under the Salutation of several Ideas of his Puissance, Name, and Character, and with much the same sort of *Rewards* or *Beatitudes* in his Hand. That those Churches, or respective Aggregates of individual Christians, *which live not up to the Light of the Gospel, shall lose it: That they shall, in due time, be visited, who corrupt it: That the Lord Jesus will come quickly, and the Time is at hand, every Day and Year, with respect to the Concern of every Individual, and as uncertain as human Life: That the Reward is to none, but he that overcometh: That the Doctrine of Balaam* (throwing stumbling Blocks and giving unavoidable Offence) and the *Seductions of Jezabel* (which lead to Superstition and Idolatry) *are to be shunn'd and repented of: That a Conceitedness in being rich in Externals of Religion, as equivalent to being rich in good Works, is the great Hypocrisy of Religion; a State of Wretchedness, Poverty, Blindness, and Nakedness: That Lukewarmness, or want of sufficient Zeal for the Religion of the End, when that is defective; or for the Religion of the Means where that is denied, or slighted, is the Ruin of the true Christian Religion and its whole Design. At all times it is very right therefore, That he that hath an Ear to hear, should hear what the*

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*Spirit saith unto the Churches: And blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the Words of this Prophecy, and keep those things that are written [to this purpose] therein; for the Time is at hand. Supposing this to be the Design of that Prophecy, there is no more Absurdity in calling it a Revelation that wants to be revealed, than in saying there is a Providence of God, whose Ways we know not.*

SECONDLY, without having Recourse to various Opinions about the Etymology of the Word Mystery \*, we may easily fix upon one uniform Idea of it according to the New Testament, and be agreed in one certain intelligible Sense, as resulting collectively from the aforesaid Places, viz. a Discovery, or rather a certain profitable Parcel of a Discovery of something useful from God, which was not at all, or not so fully revealed, or made known BEFORE. This adequate Notion of Scripture-Mystery being laid down, it follows,

I. THAT the Mysteries of the Gospel are such Discoveries and Overtures of Knowledge, as the Reason of Man could never of *itself* have found out. Had it not been handed down to us from the Writings of the Apostles, to whom the Knowledge of *Christ*, and of the *Holy Spirit* was so revealed, as to have the Privilege of seeing the one, and an extraordinary Fellowship with the other in working of Miracles; we should never have heard whether there was any *Holy Ghost*, or an *only begotten Son* of that God,

\* Which may be seen by those who have the Curiosity, in *Swicer. Thesaur. & Voss. Etymol.*

with whom our Reason is now happily acquainted. CHAP. XVIII.  
For none can say that *Jesus* is the Lord but by the *Holy Ghost*; who searcheth the deep things of God, and revealeth them to us. It belong'd to God only, to constitute the *Mediator* between himself and Man; and the Revelation of him, and the things of his Kingdom, must necessarily therefore come unto Man, as it did, from Heaven. In that Sense the Mystery was certainly above or beyond the Reason of Man to have found out without an Information from above, by a Delegation from Heaven.

ALL the collective Wisdom and Prudence of the Wise and Prudent of this World, could never have found out that Abyss of God's Love and Wisdom in sending his Son into the World, for reconciling it to himself. And this very well explains *Job. vi. 44. No Man can come unto me except the Father draw him, i. e. as the next ver. shews, unless he is taught of God.* As the Words were address'd to the *Jews*, it is peculiarly true of *them*, that none will receive *Jesus* for their expected *Messiah*, unless they are first convinced out of the Old Testament, wherein they are taught of God concerning him: but it holds good in general, that none other will come to Christ as their Saviour, except they are taught of God, or drawn by the Teaching of that Spirit which reveals *Christ* in the Scriptures:— And hereby know we the Spirit of God: Every Spirit or Doctrine commanded to be tried, that confesseth that *Jesus Christ* is come in the *Flesh*, is of God, 1 *Job. iv. 2.* This Faith cometh only of bearing the Word of God; not the natural, but the spiritual Man is inform'd of it, 1 *Cor. ii. 14. i. e. one who receiveth the Revelation of the Spirit.*



CHAP. Spirit. By comparing Scripture with Scripture, XVIII. the *Jew* might arrive at the true Knowledge of their *Messiah*; but the *Greek* had no taste left but for his modish Wisdom, whatever presented itself, not having the current Stamp, was scorn'd as Foolishness, and disrelish'd as babbling: depending wholly upon his *natural* Reason, Philosophical Deductions, and vain Philosophy, he *cannot* possibly *know them* that way, before Revelation discovers them; they are *spiritually discern'd*, knowable only by Revelation from the Spirit; nor can he receive them, as long as he rejects that way of knowing: But admit that way of Knowledge, his natural Reason plainly discerns them, the Case is alter'd, and the natural Man becomes a spiritual Man.

THE Mysteries of the Heathen Superstition were dark Frauds and Artifices of certain Confederates carrying on Imposture for wicked Ends; often placing Devotion in Impurity behind the Scenes, and therefore swearing the *Initiated* to Secrecy, but always holding it unlawful to give the *prophane* common Worshippers any written Knowledge of their Mysteries; thus it was among the ancient *Druids*, once the Oracles of this Kingdom \*. But those of our holy Religion all tend to Holiness and Purity, and are written

\* Non fas esse existimant ea, quæ de sacris docent, literis mandare. Cæf. de Bell. Gall. Lib. 6. That the Heathen Mysteries were stiled *ἱερὰ μυστήρια*, full of detestable Iniquity, vid. *Whitb. Eph. v. 12.* Cicero was both *Philosopher*, and *Priest*, and he joins both together in saying, *Illum quasi parentem hujus universitatis invenire difficile: Et cum inveneris, indicare in vulgus nefas.* Lib. de Univerf. pag. 2. 'Twas hard to discover the true God, the Parent of the Universe, and if you should discover him, 'twould be unlawful to apprise the common People of him.

for

for the Information and Edification of all; be- CHAP. cause it is generally necessary for all to under- XVIII. stand plainly the principal Truths they import. And so much, in Fact, is disclosed to *common* Apprehensions, as is of best Use to their Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, for Pardon of Sin, and Access to worship God through his Mediation; holding the Mystery of Faith in a pure Conscience and the practice of all good Works.

II. THE Mysteries of the Gospel, the *eternal Purpose* (*Eph. iii. 11.*) *eternal Covenant*, (*Heb. xiii. 20.*) were *gradually* revealed and unfolded from Faith to Faith. The Series of τῶν αἰώνων, *Ages and Generations* may be reduced to three, 1. Wherein a Saviour was *promised* from the beginning, upon the first Occasion, to *FALLEN Adam*, *The Seed of the Woman shall break*, &c. and again renewed to *Abraham*, that in his Seed all Nations should be blessed. Faith in this Promise saved, and was in force till Faith in the actual Performance of it; and that Promise was the latent Gospel of the old World, and of the *Mosaic* Dispensation. When 2. It was further typified and painted out (*in claro-obscuro*) by Sacrifices, and Rites: The Old Testament being as the *Moon* shining, by the Light of the unseen *Sun*. 3. When the *Sun of Righteousness* actually arose, the *Messiah*, called the *last Age*, *Days*, &c. Hence it appears that true *Salvation*, i. e. Remission of Sins through the *one Mediator*, whom God ordain'd, is in Substance and Efficacy one and the same saving Truth from the Beginning of the World to the End thereof; from *fallen Adam* to the last Man; only the Knowledge thereof is more explicate at some time,

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CHAP. XVIII. than others; and to some People and Nations, above others. The Revelation in its last Perfection was according to *Joh. i. 16. Grace for Grace, or Favour unto Favour; the Law of Moses a Shadow of good things to come, being Favour under a Veil; to uncover which came the valuable Favour and open Mercy of most gracious Truth by Jesus Christ, properly meriting the Name of the Grace of God, (Tit. ii. 11.)*

A DISCOVERY by Degrees, till the Effusion of the Holy Ghost after Christ's Ascension, has all along been the Œconomy of God. The Patriarchs and Profits saw comparatively to what the Apostle saw, and we have read, but thro' a Glass darkly; yet with their less Knowledge were, nevertheless, holy Men. Whence it may be inferr'd, that a general Conception, or obscure confused Notion of the saving Mysteries of Faith, is in some Cases a saving Knowledge; at least, when and where farther Degrees of a distinct Understanding is not attainable, with respect to the Capacities, and Opportunities of several People. Tho' the Evangelical Mysteries are revealed, and in that Respect so far as they are so, not hid to some Part of the World, they notwithstanding retain the Vulgar Acception of the Word, *i. e. unintelligible* to a great Part of it; so much of it as the Gospel has yet to instruct concerning those Truths. But blessed are our Eyes, for we see, &c. —

III. IT is to be observed, that the MYSTERY of God and the Father, or God the Father, and of Christ — of Christ — of the Gospel — the Riches of Christ (*Eph. iii. 8.*) — of the Glory of this Mystery — of full Assurance

CHAP. XVIII. Assurance of Understanding — all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge — the Riches of his Grace wherein he hath abounded towards us in all Wisdom and Prudence — the Mystery of his Will — and St. Paul's own Knowledge of that Mystery display'd unto others, all consist, if we will let the Apostle explain himself, (*Eph. iii. 3—7. compared with ch. i. 7, 8, 9.*) in the Knowledge of the Redemption we have thro' his [Christ's] Blood, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS; revealed to Gentiles, as well as Jews. Other Scriptures make the Notion of the Name Jesus, *i. e. Saviour and Redeemer*, to consist in saving his People from their Sins, and the Knowledge of Salvation [from Enemies, the Devil and his Works] to his People, to be in, by, or for the Remission of their Sins †. And consequently the Salvation, which the Scripture is able to make wise unto, through Faith which is in Christ Jesus †, and the Salvation, which is the END of our Faith ‖, in the Mystery of Christ, and the Gospel, are the same thing with the Forgiveness of Sin; the Revelation, Knowledge, or Mystery of one, is the Revelation, Knowledge, or Mystery of the other. This is the prime Fundamental of our Knowledge therein, therefore called the Word §, the Gospel †, the Way \*\*, of Salvation, New Testament, or Covenant; wherein God will, upon that Faith, Repentance, and Amendment, remember Sin and Iniquity no more; declar'd also to be the very Way of knowing the

† Luke i. 77. ‡ 2 Tim. iii. 15. || 1 Pet. i. 9.  
§ Acts xiii. 26. † Eph. i. 13.  
\*\* Acts xvi. 17. which explains those Expressions, any of this Way, ch. ix. 2. speak evil of that Way — no small stir about that Way, ch. xix. 9, 23 — after the Way which they call, &c. ch. vi. 14.

CHAP. Lord from the least to the greatest, (Jer. xxxi. 34.)  
 XVIII. glad Tidings to all People; the Peace of God,  
 preaching Peace by Jesus Christ; being saved,  
 justified finally; Joy, Eternal Life, &c.

MAKING known what is the Riches of the Glory of this Mystery, *that our Hearts may be comforted*; and when Words fail of extolling the great Riches of that Grace, we are to abound therein with *Thanksgiving* \*. Let the Peace of God rule † in our Hearts, *i. e.* according to the Force of the Original, moderate and decide Controversies; to the which Peace we are called, but not to doubtful Disputation in our Knowledge of Christ. That Love of Christ *passeth Knowledge, i. e.* excelleth, *surpasseth*, according to the Original, all other Knowledge; and that Peace of God in like manner, *passeth* all other Understanding or Science, being a Peace which the World cannot give.

AND because we may so well understand that Divine Science, the Powers of *that Faculty* (*Simplex Apprehensio, Judicium, Discursus*) improving in *that part* of the Mystery, according to what is commanded, are said to be most profitably filled with the *Fulness of the Knowledge of God in Christ, reconciling the World to himself*, which is the Glory and Perfection of our Knowledge of them: Especially when they take into Consideration the *Fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily* || for making him a complete Mediator of Redemption and Intercession for us; and that *Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ* to

\* Col. i. 27. ii. 2, 7. iii. 15.

† Rom. xiv. 1.

|| Col. ii. 9.

which

which they may grow and improve, and make a CHAP. perfect Man in the Knowledge of that Mystery. XVIII. The Love of God in sending his Son into the World, and the Love and Humiliation of the Son taking our Nature upon him, and by his Death, Resurrection, and Ascension perfecting our Peace and Reconciliation, is the wondrous Disclosure of the Mystery of Godliness, the Fountain of all Mercy and Pardon, Means of Grace and Hopes of Glory, the exciting Principle of Repentance and Prayer, and a perpetual Fund of Obedience, Thanksgiving, and Adoration.

WOULD we be inform'd wherein he hath abounded towards us in all Wisdom and Prudence of the Mystery? It consists in the *Redemption we have through his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins according to the Riches of his Grace* \*. Or would we be contented with St. Paul's own Knowledge of the Matter? he declares it to consist in the same †; and confines himself to that Point ||; and calls his writing of it, the *speaking the Wisdom of God in a Mystery* ‡. Would we know the great Article of Faith to which he would have all the Nations obedient, to whom the Mystery, the Preaching of Jesus Christ is made manifest by the Scriptures §; he acquaints us in the beginning of that Ep. † that it is, *concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the Seed of David according to the Flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with Power, according to the Spirit of Holiness by the Resurrection from the Dead*.

\* Eph. i. 7, 8.

† — iii. 3, 4, compared with

eb. i. 7, 8.

|| 1 Cor. ii. 2.

‡ — Ver. 7.

§ Rom. xvi. 25, 26.

† Ch. i. 3, 4, 5.

To

To the making known *this* Gospel of God, and of Christ, he declares himself made an Apostle; and that it is the Power of God unto Salvation to all that believe \*. The Son of God taking our Flesh, dying for our Sins, and rising again for our Justification, being the Summary of the Gospel; and the Proof of that Mystery of Christ, as to both Parts of his Divine and Human Nature, *Son of God*, and *Son of Man*, he wisely reduces moreover to a prov'd Matter of Fact, to prevent all Philosophical Speculation about his being the Son of God. For as he was Son of Man *κατὰ σάρκα ἐκ σπέρματος Δαβὶδ*, by taking our Flesh, (and dying) so was it Matter of Fact, that he was Son of God also *κατὰ πνεῦμα ἀγιοσύνης*, by the Resurrection from the Dead: There was the Power of the Proof of it, sufficient for any Christian, that the Holy one who saw no Corruption was the Son of God. All the after Miracles were wrought in the Name of *Christ risen*, and to attest that Truth; and what Truth, what Fact was ever so well attested by History? For he not only wrought many Miracles by his own Power, and in his own Name (doing others, sometimes as the Prophet, the Sent of God, anointed with the Holy Ghost and with Power) the Abundance of which St. John, in the Close of his Gospel, makes a Case of Record, that he was the Son of God. But the Miracle of all was, his raising himself from the Dead, as he asserts of his own Power to do, Demonstration of Omnipotence! Therefore doubtless the Son of God.

\* Rom. i. 16.

WOULD

WOULD we lastly know, what the Apostle calls a *great Mystery*, (and then we shall have gone through all the Scriptures, where Mystery is mentioned in reference to Christ, or his Divinity) there are but two Places, *Eph. v. 32. 1 Tim. iii. 16.* And if all the other Passages apply *Mystery* to practical Purposes and not to Theories, even those Places where *great* is superadded to *Mystery*, will be found still more in the same Design. *Eph. v. 32.* The Spirit of Revelation condescends to apply the Union between the Husband and Wife to illustrate the intimate Love and Relation between Christ and his Church; but especially that Instance of it in the preceding Verse, *For this Cause shall a Man leave his Father, &c. and cleave to, &c.* This is a *great Mystery*, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. That is, as the Man leaves his Father, &c. so Christ left, as it were, his Father to be joined to his Church: Prodigious Love, and Condescension! And what better Argument for our Love, and Submission to him?

1 Tim. iii. 16. And without Controversy, great is the *Mystery of Godliness*: God was manifest in the Flesh, &c. The Incarnation of our Lord and Saviour is worthily called a *great Mystery*, inasmuch as the real Divinity and Humanity of Christ, as *Son of God*, and *Son of Man*, is the great Point and Corner-Stone of Christianity. The Creed commonly call'd *Athanasian*, says nothing but the Truth, a Truth worth all the rest; "The right Faith is this, that we believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, is God and Man." But how much is it our Prudence to observe further, for



for what End is it divulg'd? to what Uses appointed? and what sort of Mystery described? Not a Speculative, not a Notional one, devised for Disputation; but a truly quiet, religious, practical, and exceeding wise one; improveable to *Godliness* only, that is the Conduct of the Mystery, that is its very Proposal, that is the whole of its express'd Contents, whenever we are so wise as to lay aside vain Philosophy; tho' we know and believe, or think we know and believe many things concerning it, we know them all amiss, if our Knowledge does not confine itself to this Point. The inconceivable Part, the perpetual Theme of Controversy, is *not* the Mystery of Godliness, but that which is intelligible and matter of Fact, plainly set down, *God manifested in the Flesh*: The Sum of that and the Scope of the Particulars following *justified in the Spirit*, &c. is *GODLINESS*; that is the great Aim of this great Mystery; confirm'd by and confined to the Necessity of *holding the Mystery of that Faith in a pure Conscience* towards God and Man: next to the Being of God, the Apostle would have it accounted the most certain Thing in the World; and to be so confessedly plain, as to be without any Controversy among Christians. And it is the more observable, that this great Apostle, who was favour'd with the last Knowledge and Discovery from the *Lord Jesus* himself, concerning the Mystery of himself, in his Directions to *Timothy*, should fix and ascertain the precise Meaning, single View, and entire Purpose of it, to *Godliness*, and a *pure Conscience*: To certain Godliness, not to doubtful Disputation; to Godliness and Honesty, tending to heavenly Felicity, not worldly Wrangling. This is the worthy Subject

Subject of reasonable Christian Faith, because it CHAP.  
is the Object of Reason, as well as Faith, ever XVIII.  
since Scripture has revealed it to Reason.

IV. LET it especially be observed, that the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, notwithstanding they are *revealed*, are revealed but IN PART. The Part that is indeed revealed or made known to its proper Faculty, the Understanding, is so far now not a Secret; but a most edifying Ground, and the substantiallest Reason for Piety and Virtue, that ever was exhibited to the World. And so far as it is discover'd, is become a Matter of common Knowledge, and firm Assent of the understanding Faculty, which is, in a great Measure, the true Import of Faith in Scripture. There is the bright, and there is the shady Side of the Mystery, the *τὸ ἥμερον*, and the *τὸ ἄρρητον*; one the sublunary usu-fructuary Part for the present Occasion of bringing us to Heaven; the other the distant, dark, impervious Side reserv'd to another State; to which we assent in the general Method of giving Credit to God, that whatever he certainly speaks of his own Nature, is certainly true, and may be useful to us hereafter by a more perfect Disclosure, in the Vision of God; a Vision that is the Christian's reverfionary Knowledge and Fruition of Mystery. Had no part been disclosed, there had been no Notion at all engendred; but enough is open'd to kindle Desire, and stir up human Endeavour, and completely do the Business of a *Notion in part*; which, in Truth, is all the Notion that we Men, who are Notion-guided Creatures, have either of Things Natural, or Reveal'd.

## DEISM DELINEATED.

I. As to Things reveal'd, the Apostles themselves writing in the true Sublime, or most intelligible Character, that belongs to such Things as they respect us at present, confess, that they *knew but IN PART* and *prophefied* (i. e. instruct others, as Prophecy often signifies in Scripture, and especially in that Scripture, 1 Cor. xiv. 1. *Covet earnestly the best Gifts, but rather that ye prophefy, i. e. teach; which is the standing, the useful, and most edifying Talent unto others*) IN PART: Assigning the Reason from the Constitution of Things according to the Will of God; *when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away*, 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 10. And if the very Secretaries and Amanuenses of those Celestial Discoveries speaking of Mysteries and Knowledge, spake so of themselves, at the time they were inspired with the Holy Ghost, who led them into *all* Truth, how much more Reason have we to acquiesce in a *partial* Apprehension, and deem it sufficiently profitable for us? The Understanding *in part*, which is the Measure of our Faith and the Portion allotted to us at present, is a very contentable Knowledge; there is enough and to spare for our real Service, and its Views upon us; and what shou'd we do with more than enough, or why desire it? And the Excellency of it is, that it is very obvious, and very fruitful. Whilst arduous Speculations soaring in Theory, and in lofty Clouds, and like the aqueous Drops of Rain boyant and floating there, of no use at all to us, till they descend to water the Capacity of common Fruitfulness. If the great and eloquent Apostle wou'd rather speak *five Words* to the Churches of God, concerning

## DEISM DELINEATED

cerning things whereby we must be saved, *with the Understanding*, and to the Understanding, *that he might teach others also; than ten thousand Words in an unknown Tongue*; is it not better for us Readers, and Students of his Words, to measure the Meaning by the profess'd Design, which is to *profit* withal? And to receive such as worthy of all Acceptation, concerning the Points of Salvation, as give us an Understanding of the Matter, by arguing plainly what is our Interest and Concern therein, and the Manner how we are to profit withal? and to prefer such before ten thousand Volumes of intricate Disputation, which are all, with respect to the Business of profiting, to almost all People, in an unknown Tongue, tho' wrote in that wherein they were born.

"THERE was none of the Doctrines of our Saviour calculated for the Gratification of Mens idle Curiosity, the busying and amusing them with airy and useles Speculations; much less were they intended for an Exercise of Credulity, or a Trial how far we could bring our Reason to submit to Faith: But, as on the one Hand they were plain and simple, and such as by their Agreeableness to the rational Faculties of Mankind, did highly recommend themselves to our Belief; so on the other Hand they had an immediate Relation to Practice, and were the genuine Principles and Foundations upon which all human and divine Virtues were naturally to be superstructed\*."

\* *Archbishop of York's Sermon before the Queen, Christmas-Day, 1704.*

CONSIDERING the Wisdom and Goodness of God, who is perfect in all his Works, and never does things by halves, 'tis a great Presumption, or rather Demonstration, that we are either incapable of understanding that part which is kept secret, or, that it is useless for us to be appriz'd of it in this Life present: Better therefore lock'd up by him, who does all things for the best, whilst the useful Part is display'd and made known. And we have clear distinct Ideas, and may talk as intelligibly of that Part of the Mystery, as of any other plain thing; so that none need be at a Loss to give a Reason of the Hope that is in them.

THO' we, who were sometime Darkness, are now Light in the Lord, and his Revelation is put into our Hands as a Telescope for a clearer Insight into divine and heavenly Things, yet we know very well that where the Telescope shews what we could not see without it, it does not shew *all*: But still it is, as the Scripture acquaints us, *we see through a Glass darkly*. The concerning edifying Part wherein we are interested, shines bright like the Sun, and our Heart burns within us, when we cordially converse with it; whilst the other twinkles like the more distant fix'd Stars. And if an ordinary magnifying Glass can make such Discoveries here to our bodily Eyes of a new World of invisible Insects and Seeds, &c. \* (incredible if it had been written or

\* "By means of that excellent Instrument [*Microscope*] we have a far greater Number of different kinds of Things reveal'd to us, than were contain'd in the visible Universe before." *Hist. R. S.* pag. 384. And I would add, that the

or reported only, and the Invention of those magnifying Glasses had never been communicated to the World) what vast felicitating Discoveries remain in the next World, to the Spirit of Man beholding God *Face to Face*? If the Defect is in our present imperfect Faculties, it is plain, we shall never be able, in this Life, to attain the vainly aspiring Knowledge of the *Manner* how. When we arrive at higher Degrees of Knowledge, and Revelation in another World, the *Manner* will be manifest, and we shall be *Comprehenders* of the *whole* Mystery; which put us in mind to be contented, at present, to be *Apprehenders* of the Thing *in general*, and its best Use.

THE Scriptures never design'd to give Information farther than serves to qualify us in a *godly, sober, righteous* Life, in order to lead us to the Happiness to which we were ordain'd; by raising the active Faculties of our Understanding and Will, of our Love, Hope, Fear, to the securing our Obedience to him, from the affecting Consideration of the Interest we have in his most gracious Transactions with us; not by Exhibitions of his *Essence, Substance, &c.* things above our Comprehension in this Life; but of his great Goodness in creating, redeeming, preserving us; his Power, his Dominion, his Wisdom as a Governor, his Legislature over our Thoughts, Words and Actions, his present Inspection over, and future Account in judging us: all which we understand to an Accuracy, and

the Grandeur and Almightyness of the Skill of the Divine Architect, is no less seen in those invisible Myriads, than in the grosser Objects of his framing.

CHAP. are as much agreed in, as in the Truth of our  
XVIII. own Existence. The saving edifying Part of  
the Mystery, the faithful Saying that directs our  
Faith to its Use, and is worthy of all Accepta-  
tion, *That Christ the only begotten Son of God came  
into the World to save Sinners*, is revealed and  
made plain even to *Babes*, the most inferior Un-  
derstandings.

SUCH is the Excellency of the Knowledge  
of Christ; and on that account as well as others,  
*has God abounded towards us in all Wisdom and  
Prudence*: mean time the speculative Part sub-  
ject to Disputation and intricate Distinctions, is  
still *hid from the Wise and Prudent*, as to Har-  
mony and Agreement about it. The Abstract  
Intelligence of the Divine Being is exalted far  
above our Capacity, whilst that which is de-  
rivable from his Government over, his Love and  
Mercy towards us, certain in their Effects, and  
therefore plain in their Causes, is very nigh to  
us, and we collect them from the Works of his  
Hands, from continual Benefits, from the salu-  
tary Concerns that have been negotiated, and  
are still negotiating between God and us: What  
the *Father* hath done, what the *Son*, what the  
*Holy Ghost* have done, and still do for us, all  
co-operating in the Restoration and Salvation  
of Mankind; to honour the Father for what  
he has done; to honour the Son likewise for  
what he has done, and is to do in the Day  
of Judgment; and to do no despite to the  
Spirit of Grace; is exceeding plain. And it is  
no less plain, that it ought to be consider'd by  
us chiefly in that Aspect and Relation; what  
Returns of Duty are becoming, what Behaviour  
is required of us, as we are peculiarly initiated  
into

into a lively Faith in their Names, Charac-CHAP.  
ters and Offices, by that holy Baptism which XVIII.  
distinguishes the Christian from the rest of the  
World.

THOSE external Relations to us of Creator,  
Redeemer, Sanctifier, more import us, than the  
internal Relations among themselves. That good  
Knowledge does certainly concern us as a Duty,  
as it is evidently foodful in its Ideas to the Chri-  
stian Life, fully satisfies the Understanding,  
mightily ingratiates and obliges the Will, highly  
raises the Affections of the Soul, and actuates  
the religious Powers of the whole Man to an uni-  
versal Obedience. The *unmanifested* part of the  
Mystery is the hypothetical and schematical part  
of believing; take you the Shell, give me the  
Kernel!—whilst the *manifested* part of it is *God  
with us*, to all Purposes of Godliness and Holiness,  
Wisdom and Goodness, Peace and Joy in believing,  
the very Propriety and End of Mystery, and the  
true Institution of its Doctrine; declared to be  
*manifested* to take away our Sins—to destroy the  
Works of the Devil—to expect Reconciliation  
with God; Resurrection to eternal Life; to look  
for Remission of Sins; Answer to our Prayers;  
and Assistance of his Spirit; in the *NAME* of  
Jesus Christ our *Mediator* and Redeemer. Keeping  
to these undoubted great Benefits, easy Practice,  
and plainly declared Purpose of this Mystery, it  
deserves the Name *great*; worthy in itself and  
of its great Author: This is setting forward the  
Salvation of *all Men*; this is obvious to the  
meanest Capacities. The Laws relating to these  
saving Uses, are therefore binding to all, be-  
cause they are so plain to all; and the Trans-  
gression must be Sin.



As the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, *Son of God*, and *Son of Man*, the One Mediator between God and Man, is the Consummation of divine Wisdom, Power, Righteousness, and Godliness for the Redemption of the World, full of the best Influence for Reconciliation and Goodness, Peace and good Works, and is positively, plainly, and abundantly revealed; how happy had it been, if Christians had always kept to the plain Words of Revelation, without diminishing what is written, or abounding in vain Imaginations above what is written, thro' luxuriant Conjectures and Philosophical Speculations never once able to convert the World to Righteousness? The Churches of God had never known so much Distraction and Violence, nor the History of it been stain'd with the Names of so many Heresies, Sects and Divisions, severally setting up to *make* Christ their Saviour, after their own conceited Manner, different from what God has made and presented him, who would therefore have the Gift (a most reasonable thing) accepted just as he gives it, without Alteration or Amendment.

THE *Carpocratians*, *Cerintbians*, *Ebionites*, and *Gnostics* made him the Son of *Joseph* and *Mary*, like all other Men: That *Christ* descend-  
ed upon *Jesus* in the Shape of a Dove after his Baptism, and in the End flew away again from *Jesus*, who suffer'd and rose again, but Christ continued impassible, as being of a spiritual Nature. From them the *Docetæ* set up the *Apparition*, to the Denial of the Reality of his Human Nature, as the *Valentinians*, &c. The Followers of *Paulus Samosetanus*, with the *Socinians*, wholly reject

reject his *Divine*, as Son of God, and constitute him entirely of an Human Nature. The *Sabelians* or *Patripassians* incarnate God the Father, instead of God the Son. The *Arians*, whilst they allow, diminish both the Natures of Christ; his Divine, by asserting *there was a Time when he was not*; his Human, by substituting the *λόγος* in lieu of the rational Soul. The *Apollinarians* deny'd his rational, whilst they allow'd him a sensitive Soul. The *Nestorians* held a slender, *extrinsic*, imperfect Union of the Divine and Human Nature, or Substance; whilst the *Eutychians* maintained in Opposition, that before the Union there were two, but after it no more than one Nature.

THE two last quarrel'd bitterly about the Manner of the Union, which neither of them understood; and the less they understood, the more they were enraged against one another; and as there was no Hopes of converting, they call'd in Blows and the Secular Arm to devour one another; which finish'd the Catastrophe of the *Eastern Churches*: But, that they might each be equally punish'd, the Secular Arm of *Mahomet* enslav'd them both without Distinction, and imposed the heavy Yoke of *oppressive Tribute*, ever since upon all their poor shatter'd Churches. So miserably have *Hereticks* in all Ages mangled and divided *Christ Jesus* into Parts and Parcels, Bits and Pieces; in direct Contradiction to the fundamental Truth of his being *perfect God*, and *perfect Man*, and so a perfect Mediator between both. What, alas! can be a greater Crime or worse Sense of *Heresy*, than for the wanton Wit of Man to go about to *put asunder* that, for the Confusion and Devastation of Mankind,

CHAP. which God has join'd together for their general  
XVIII. Salvation?

FAR be it from God, who does Right to all his sincere Worshippers and the Faculties of all his Servants, to expect us to believe, *i. e.* understand, the Part that is abstruse, to which our Mind has very difficult, if any Access, with the same Affection, Zeal, and fruitful Improvement, as what we do apprehend, perceiving our Relation to it, and its Influence over us: To bid us see what he has cover'd with a Veil, that be far from God. — If it is in a Manner morally impossible for the *Generality* either to know the several Schemes and Hypotheses of Disputers, or make any Judgment of those abstruse Points when known; that sort of Knowledge could never be intended as generally fundamental, nor required of God as necessary to Salvation; not by him certainly, who never commands any thing impossible; not by that Divine Wisdom, which is no Respector of Parts or Persons, and never wanted condescending Goodness, or intelligible Expressions to discover every thing necessary so clearly, or rather so much the more plainly to all, as it was necessary and fundamental for all to know; the better to work in every Soul the subsequent End, Practice, the ultimate Issue for which we shall all be judged. And to keep our Understandings to their proper, profiting Measure of Faith, the Apostle encourages us to enlarge, range, and satiate our Minds, not in the abstract Theory of God, or Christ, not in the Abyss of his Nature, but of his *Love*: That is infinite, and no Comprehension required of it; this is likewise infinite, yet we are bid to comprehend it; because 'it is so much

much our Interest and Advantage to be drawn CHAP.  
to God by an Attraction as strong as infinite; XVIII.  
and because we are to take measure of it in our Contemplation, there are Dimensions given to it, *Breadth, Length, Depth, and Height*; that being fill'd therewith, we may be fill'd, as it is express'd, *with all the Fulness of God*.

"IT is true indeed, says the present worthy  
"Dean of Christ-Church, any Pains taken in  
"fixing the *Meaning of the Words*; in stating  
"the *Doctrines*; or freeing them from the Charge  
"of *Contradiction*, will be usefully employ'd:  
"Because whatever Doctrines have been deli-  
"ver'd by God, he hath given withal sufficient  
"Means of rightly understanding them: And  
"it is our Duty to use our best Endeavours  
"both to understand them rightly, and to clear  
"them from such Objections as may be urged  
"against them. But to proceed farther than  
"this; to frame *Hypotheses* by which to solve  
"Difficulties by us *insolvable*, and to explain  
"things by us *inexplicable*, is (to use the softest  
"Expression) a very extraordinary Proceeding."  
*Mysteries of the Christ. Rel. Sermon at Oxford,*  
pag. 23.

THE Author of *Characteristicks*, "without  
"the least Difficulty allows of *Mystery* in the  
"Honestum and Pulchrum\*." Why not in this,  
which transcends all his *Beautifuls*?

2. NOT only in Scripture, but in Nature,  
how uniform is God, who has given us all  
things appertaining to *Life and Godliness*, πάντα πρὸς  
ζωὴν καὶ εὐσεβείαν, in his Dispensations of Know-

\* *Charact.* Vol. III. pag. 182.

ledge?

ledge? As in the former he reveals in part, and reserves in part; so he discovers and obscures in part, in the latter; "concealing from the Mind of Man any other Knowledge even of such familiar things, but what concerns the Ways of using them; and the Sciences which are design'd for the Knowledge of their Nature, discover nothing in them but what is of use to us, and we find all things wrapt up in so much the greater Darkness, the more we endeavour to penetrate into their Nature beyond what is useful \*." There are Spots and dark Places to be seen in the bright shining Sun in the Firmament, upon a closer Inspection; it is therefore uniform, that there should be something obscure and unintelligible in the *Sun of Righteousness*, which enlightens the moral World. Origen has with great Sublimity and beauty of Thought, observ'd this Uniformity in the Revelation of the Words of God, as Author of that Revelation; as in his Works, as Author of Nature, "That he who acknowledges the Scriptures to have proceeded from him who created the World, or is the Author of Nature, may well expect to meet with the like kind of Unintelligibles, and Difficulties in them, as are to be met with in the Constitution of Nature †."

It is plain then, that Reason and Nature is full as deficient in regard to the *Modus* and *Manner* of Things, as Revelation; and therefore no more fault to be found with one than the other: which should afford an Argument of Similitude, that both derive from the same divine Original; and that the present Defect of Know-

\* *Principles of Law in general*, pag. 6.  
*Phil.* pag. 23.

† *Orig.*  
ledge,

ledge, as to the *Manner* of the Truth and Existence of Things, is perfectly and adequately necessary for confining our limited Faculties to their proper Subject, their *Hoc age*, to what verily and indeed concerns us in the one, as well as the other. Sir *Isaac Newton*, that great Secretary of Natural Knowledge, says, "We do not at all know what the *Substance* of any thing is." Light itself, (the same may be said of Knowledge if there be too much of it) if increased beyond a due Proportion to our present Organ, causes a very unserviceable Sensation. And Mr. *Locke*, "I may confidently say, that the intellectual and sensible World are in this perfectly alike. That that part which we see of either of them, holds no Proportion with what we see not; and whatsoever we can reach with our Eyes or our Thoughts of each of them, is but a Point, almost nothing in comparison of the rest." "He that knows any thing, knows this in the first place, that he need not seek long for Instances of his Ignorance \*." There is the Philosophy of Air, Fire, and Water, daily Necessaries, and absolutely so: But what is the Life of the Body concerned in this Scheme, or that? What is more obvious or better known even to the *Deist* himself, than the *Omnipresence* of God, that he is not far from any of us; that in him we live, move, and have our Being? Yet what darker, more intricate, or unprofitable of Solution, than the physical disputatious Disquisition of the same? but what plainer, more certain, or more edifying Truth in all Nature, than the Thing itself?

\* *Human Understanding*, B. IV. Ch. III. §. 23.

CHAP.  
XVIII.

IF this is the very Constitution of Things with respect to human Understanding, and God has set one and the same Horizon to our Knowledge of Things natural and revealed; making them partly known so far, and no farther than as they are of real use to us; and partly unknown, so far as it is otherwise: And if the innumerable acknowledg'd Mysteries of the former so far tally with the few of the latter, as that we learn one as well as the other by Degrees; and before we know the Uses of either, it may be affirmed of the Knowledge of each, that it *was hid* from us; but when known, and so far as is known, revealed, and no longer hid. Does it follow, either in Revelation, or Nature, that we know nothing, or not enough, because we don't perceive the *totum cognoscibile*, the *All* of Things? Or that some Part is not clearly understood, and good for Use, in each of them, because some other Part is occult and undiscover'd in them both?

AND seeing it is regularly true and undeniable, that Things known to us by the Light of Nature, are nevertheless in *some* respect unintelligible and inexplicable, and we are informed of them but *in part*, and yet sufficiently informed: Is it not agreeable to the common Reason of Things, and the common Measure by which Knowledge is dealt out to human Capacity, to allow of Mystery likewise in Revelation? and to confess the Divine Goodness and Wisdom in one as well as the other; *i. e.* some part undiscovered and incomprehensible, whilst another, and that the better Portion, is plainly addressed to the Assent of the Mind, conveyed

conveyed over to our spiritual Occasions, and is CHAP. thereunto very sufficient, tho' a Knowledge in XVIII. part?

IT must therefore be impious Scandal to Truth, and Offence to the God of Nature, to hear Men abuse their own Reason, in exclaiming so bitterly, as they do, against Mystery in his Revelation of divine Things. Not only *these* Men, but Mr. Bayle \* and others, are most immodestly and outrageously guilty of this witless Ridicule. Can that ever be a Proof of an elevated Understanding, or a clear Sight into Religion, which is so apparent a Demonstration of the Shallowness of one, and the Want of the other? If Mystery and Natural Knowledge are not *Inconsistency*, *errant Jumble*, *absurd Nonsense*, opposite or *contradictory* Terms, but co-incident in the same Subject, Nature; Why should Mystery and revealed Knowledge be ridiculed, and not admitted, in like manner, to be co-incident in the same Subject, in Holy Scripture?

AND because this Faith is misrepresented, as if the Excellency of it consisted in believing *Impossibilities*, I proceed to shew:

## II. The Co-incident of Faith and Knowledge, Faith and Reason, in Matters of Christian Duty.

As Faith is the governing Principle of the Religion of the *Means*, shedding its Influence and

\* In his celebrated Dictionary almost every where; and three of his four *Explanations* at the End, and in most of his Writings that I have seen.

Efficacy



CHAP. XVIII. Efficacy upon the Performance of the Religion of the End, and sometimes stands for the whole of true Religion, Means and End (as where Salvation is ascribed to *believing*, and Faith stands for the whole Gospel) it is the obedient Persuasion or *chosen* Assent and *Inclination* of the Mind to Truths and Doctrines discovered to us by *Revelation* from Heaven, upon sufficient rational Evidence of its divine Testimony and Authority, recorded and conveyed down to us for regulating our Lives in all the Duties of Religion. And when we are firmly persuaded of that use of them, and apply them accordingly, we are said to *know* them, and have saving Faith or Knowledge; and so having the *internal* Evidence of them, in their designed Use and Application, verifies that of 1 John v. 10. *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the Witness in himself.* And thus confining our Thoughts to what we may certainly and easily know of the Mediator, from what is plainly written, and not think it advisable to depart from that Knowledge, because our limited imperfect Faculties have not enabled us to understand *all*, we shall be entitled to the Benefit of those his Declarations, *Ye believe in God, believe also in me; this is Life Eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent: blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed.*

IN some Places of Scripture, Knowledge is differenced from Faith; as, to one is given the Word of *Knowledge*, to another *Faith* by the same Spirit.\* Tho' I understand all *Know-*

\* 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9. — xiii. 2.

ledge,

ledge, and have *Faith*, so that I could remove CHAP. XVIII. Mountains. In which Places both Knowledge and Faith are the *extraordinary* Gifts of the Spirit, current in those Days. *Add to your Faith Virtue, to Virtue Knowledge.*† Where Faith stands for the Christian Religion, or the Assent of the Mind embracing it in general as true; and Knowledge for *Prudence* in the Conduct, as well as Proficiency in understanding those Virtues in their true Circumstances that were to be superadded, mentioned in the Sequel.

BUT in most Places *Faith* and *Knowledge*, to *believe* and *know*, are promiscuously put one for t'other. To instance a few: By this we *believe* that thou camest forth from God\*; which our Saviour repeating in the following Chapter says, They have *known* surely that I came from thee, and have believed that thou didst send me: That ye may *know* and *believe* that the Father is in me, † — *believe* and *know* the Truth: ‡ We have *known* and *believed* the Love that God hath to us. || The Reason of the Disciples being slow of Heart to *believe* all the Prophets had spoken, was their not understanding the Meaning, that they certainly related to Christ and his Sufferings: When our Lord opened their understanding by expounding the Things concerning himself, that they might understand and *know* them, from understanding and knowing what they meant, they believed them. When he accuses the Worldly-minded with *O ye of little Faith*, § their Crime was, they did not with their Reason consider how God cloathed the Lilies of the Field, and

† 2 Pet. i. 5. \* 1 John xvi. 30. † — x. 38.  
‡ 1 Tim. iv. 3. || 1 John iv. 16. § Matt. vi. 30.

from

CHAP. XVIII. from thence infer the Sufficiency of his Goodness to cloath *them*; much therefore to use one's Reason in divine Providence, is to have much Faith. Why is the Woman of Canaan's Faith called *great* by our Saviour, *Matth. xv. 28.* but because her Reasoning upon the Goodness of God not to withhold *Crumbs* of Favour to any of his Creatures, was very great and apparent in her Answer. There are many other Places where *know* and *believe* are the same.\* *Ye believe in God, believe also in me—this is Life eternal to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom, &c.* So the abounding, growing, nourishing up in, and to the full Assurance of Faith and Knowledge, are synonymous. We say we *believe* in God, yet we *know* him by our Reason. *Heb. xi. 3.* By Faith we understand that the Worlds were made by the Word of God: So that Knowledge and Faith seem to be coincident in the popular, as Reason and Faith are in the philosophical Sense of those Words. Man is born to know God, but that Knowledge being impair'd by the Fall, and therefore not to be recover'd to its pristine Perfection, by reason of the Encroachment and Incumbrance of the Body, till we arrive at the next World; makes that present proper Knowledge we have of him from Faith or Revelation to coincide in that Point of bringing us thither, and Reason working upon those Materials of Knowledge, and exerting itself chiefly in sure and certain *Invisibles*, according to its chief Function, meets

\* *Job xix. 25.* — *xlii. 2.* *Prov. xi. 9.* *Ecl. xi. 9.* *Psal. cxl. 12.* *Is. xliii. 10.* *Matt. xxiv. 39.* *John iv. 25.* — *xi. 24.* *1 Cor. xv. 58.* *2 Cor. v. 1.* *2 Thes. i. 8.* *Heb. x. 34.* *1 John iii. 3.* — *v. 13.*

Faith

CHAP. XVIII. Faith more than half the Way, and goes to Heaven with it. Natural Reason, as well as Faith in God, both agree in declaring that he is, and is a *Rewarder* of those that diligently seek him: and as they agree in that Premise, by the Help of the Medium of *Revelation*, they agree likewise in the Conclusion, explicit Faith in the *Mediator*, or the Gospel. How that Faith most readily follows and flows from the other, will appear afterwards. Faith extends itself to past things, and to future: With respect to the former, it is historical Knowledge grounded upon reasonable Evidence; in regard to the latter, the Anchor of Hope.

As the Understanding perceives the Ideas of Things to agree or disagree, have, or not have a Connexion together, whether immediately, or by the intervention of other Ideas, it makes an affirmative or negative Judgment, assents or dissents. What is made necessary for it to perceive, and judge of with respect to revealed Truths, is *not* above Reason; *i. e.* its Perception and Judgment, though it *was* above Reason; *i. e.* the Capacity of Man to have discovered without the Help of Revelation.

“SOME things indeed, according to the vulgar Way of speaking, are said to be above Reason or beyond it; whereby is intimated that we may be capable of believing farther than we understand: This may be true in a qualified Sense; but in strictness of Speech, our Ideas do really extend, as far as Faith extends. As there can be no Faith without Assent, nor any Assent but to some intelligible Proposition, nor any intelligible Proposition

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tion without intelligible Terms that have proper Ideas to answer them; it is evident, that our Ideas are of the same Extent with our Faith, and that we understand as much, and no more or less, than we believe — We understand for Instance, that there is a God, and that certain Attributes essentially and incommunicably belong to him. But as to his particular Essence or Substance, wherein it formally consists, or distinguishes him from all other Beings, we believe nothing, because we are able to determine nothing. We understand in general, what the Resurrection of a Body means; and what it is for a Body to continue for ever in a State of Order, Tranquillity and Perfection. As to the manner how it subsists or acts in such a State, we can believe nothing, neither is it requir'd that we should, more or farther than we understand. We believe the Thing because it is reveal'd, and in Terms, the Meaning whereof is clear and intelligible; but the Manner can only so far be an Object of our Faith, as it is of our Perception; neither can a wise God require us to believe what we perceive nothing of. As to the Doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity we understand what we mean by One, and what by Three; the Meaning of the Terms co-eternal, co-equal, or co-essential is also known to us; but how or after what manner a Trinity of Persons, or if that is not admitted, of any distinct Qualities, Powers, or Operations; or in other Words of three, under whatever Distinction we receive them, should consist with the perfect Unity of the Divine Essence, is what we can neither believe, nor be requir'd to believe any farther than we know. We  
“ believe

“ believe as far as we have Ideas, and where we have no Ideas can have no Belief; where our Reason falls short and leaves us in the Dark, our Faith does so too.” —

“ We have Ideas so far as we believe; or may have them, so far as we are obliged to believe, and distinct Ideas too.” — “ Revelation gives us new notices of Things; it extends and enlarges our Prospect, but leaves us the same Faculties which we had before. So that our Reason has still the same Use, only a wider Compass to employ and exert itself. As in all other Things proposed to our Belief, so concerning any Articles of Religion, we are to consult the Light of our Mind, and examine by our own Faculties, how far they are to be admitted, and with what Restrictions; what weight they should have with us; and what may be justly inferr'd from them? What may be look'd upon as certain Truth; and what as being founded only in Probability or Conjecture.” — “ The most comprehensive and general Rule is, that the best Reasons, if it be necessary to judge at all, should always preponderate; and consequently the truest Faith is that, which upon the whole is most rational. The *Bible*, by this Rule, will be found the best System of Philosophy, and a true Reasoner from the proper Lights and Assurances of it will differ very little from a true Believer \*.”

FAITH being the Assent of the Mind, to know the Grounds of Assent is the same thing

\* *Fiddes Theol. Specul.* pag. 364, 5.

CHAP. XVIII. as to know the Grounds of Faith; and as it is necessary that a rational Mind should have rational ground of Faith, so it has that ground so long as it builds upon rational Evidence. Now in the Case of the Gospel, the external Testimony of the Witnesses, co-attested by the intrinsic Marks of Truth in the Record itself, is as rational, as sufficient Evidence of the Truth, as any possibly can be had, in the Case. And with respect to the Mystery of its Faith, we build our Assent both upon the Knowledge and Confidence we have in the Veracity of the Speaker, that he can neither deceive nor be deceived; and the Sense of our Duty that we ought to receive a Revelation of his Will, when he pleases to offer it; and also upon our understanding what is reveal'd of the Mystery, though all is not; and so understanding the Meaning and the Use of what is reveal'd of it, from a general implicit Act of Faith, that what God says is true, we receive and entertain it with a particular explicit Faith or Knowledge to the Use of Edifying. And so our Faith in every single Article follows after Knowledge going before; and we improve in Faith, by improving in Knowledge, as it is enjoin'd and recommended to our latest Endeavours.

WE can know then, judge, believe only that part which is revealed; *that belongs to us*, is made the Object of our Faculties for applying it to its proper Use and Intendment; and the Subject of that Trial, Proof, and Examination that is commanded; but the *secret* Part of it *belongs to God*, and not to us, and being of no present Use to us, requires no present Assent or Belief from us; where the Meaning is not made known or revealed

vealed to us, no Meaning can be assented to by us; the Mind may as well assent without assenting, as assent to what it knows nothing of. But all the Articles that relate to our Salvation and the Favour of God, so far as they relate, are so clearly reveal'd with that universal Plainness as becomes an universal Fundamental, that Knowledge and Faith kiss each other in regard to Use and Meaning. And those other Particulars, which, with respect to the manner, are not cognizable upon our best Inquiry, according to our Capacity and Opportunity, are no Objects of our particular Belief, till we arrive to understand them in particular; and all the Time they remain above our Reason, and our Judgment is suspended about them, we employ both Reason and Judgment to the best use, in leading very Christian Lives notwithstanding, and at the great Day enter into the Joy of our Lord. This is the Sense of the *Church of England* in her *Homily*. "Those Things in Scripture that be plain to understand, and necessary to Salvation, every Man's Duty is to know them, to print them in Memory, and effectually to exercise them. And as to dark Mysteries, to be content to be ignorant of them until such time as it shall please God to open them unto him. In the mean Season, if he lack either Aptness, or Opportunity, God will not impute it to his Folly \*." "We are no more to believe we know not what, than to believe we know not why †." "Faith is the Conclusion of a Syllogism ‡."

\* *Second Part of the Homily of the Holy Scriptures.* † *Norris's Reason and Faith*, pag. 64. ‡ *Ibid.* pag. 90.



OF the Incarnation of our Saviour, for Instance, God manifest in the Flesh, we know, judge, and believe, that he is the only begotten Son of God by Nature, that the Divine and Human Nature are united in one Person, the fittest and compleatest Mediator possible between God and Man, for doing every Thing related of him; and we know that whatever is possible, the Power of God can effect; but *how* he is the Son of God, or the Son of a Virgin, or *how* those two Natures are personally united, we know, judge, and believe nothing at all, because nothing is reveal'd; and that nothing is reveal'd is unquestionably, because we can't understand it at present; or because, if we could, there is no Edification in such Knowledge; the Apostle assuring us we can be edified by nothing but what we understand \*. But the other is a most religious and concerning Truth plainly reveal'd to common Understanding, to traffick withal to eternal Life; and that is, by coming to God through him, as the Mediator of Redemption and Intercession, of Repentance and Devotion, as the Patron of our Acceptance, who getteth thee Pardon for thy Sins, the perfect Teacher of God's Will, the Pattern of Obedience, and Judge of our Behaviour in Thought, Word and Deed, to give to every Man according to his deservings. And the common obvious Ideas of such a Son, of such a Father, raises an Apprehension of his Dignity; and no less Affection of Mind, as exalts the Love of the Father, and of the Son to the highest Degree conceivable; which conciliates and attracts our Love to them

\* 1 Cor. xiv.

upon

upon the Principle of the greatest Benefits received, and to be received; and establishes our Trust, Honour and Adoration, as is it commanded. CHAP. XVIII.

THE inspired Writer directs what is to be done in the Case; *Secret Things belong unto the Lord our God; but those Things that are revealed (so far as they are so) unto us, and to our Children for ever, that we may do all the Words of this Law\**. There is an untranspassable Gulph fix'd between Knowledge reserv'd, and Knowledge communicated. There we have our way mark'd out, as it were with Rubricks, on this Hand, and on that; directing where we should not, and where we may tread, and for what purpose we are to travel in a Road, wherein we are all to travel. Our Search is prohibited, and all undue Temerity restrain'd that presumes to go beyond its prescribed Bounds, in quest of Intelligence in Things, where Intelligence is expressly withheld by the Father of Light and Wisdom. But as to what is reveal'd to its proper Faculty, the Understanding, so far our Pursuits and Enquiries are animated and encouraged to proceed; more especially when it proposes to draw those Uses and Improvements, which answer the declar'd Purpose of the Revelation, *that we may do all the Words of this Law*.

How proper and becoming then is it to regulate our Appetite after Knowledge by the Counsel of the Son of Syrach, *Seek not Things that are too hard for thee, neither search the Things that are above thy Strength; but what is commanded thee*

\* Deut. xxix. 29.

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think

CHAP. XVIII. think thereon with Reverence; for it is not needful for thee to see with thine Eyes the Things that are secret; be not curious in unnecessary Matters, for more Things are shewn unto thee than Men understand, and many are deceiv'd with their own vain Opinion\*. Hardly do we guess aright at Things that are upon Earth, and with Labour do we find the Things that are before us; but the Things that are in Heaven who hath searched out? Touching the Almighty we can't find him out to Perfection, nor can we order our Words by reason of Darkneſs†.

YET after all the Labyrinths of Dispute in Philosophic Theory, Christians are agreed (I speak to the Deists) in the religious Sense of one God, and of the Spirit of God sanctifying us, and in the general Practice of worshipping God through the Mediator, and in paying Divine Honour and Obedience to him, as well as to the Father, according to the Commandment. But why is the Deist and Sceptick so unfair, as to attend only to those Speculations wherein they differ, and not likewise to those Principles wherein they agree. They stand condemn'd by all Sides, and have no Right to condemn either, as neither joining in the Speculations wherein they vary, nor in the better Foundation wherein they agree; nor yet to condemn both Sides, unless there happens a Want of Temper, since that Foundation has been shewn to stand so sure. Whether there be three Minds or one Mind, three Wills or one Will, since it is agreed that the three Divine Persons co-operate together in creating, redeeming, and sanctifying; they act as one God, tho' not as one Person; therefore the Deists have no

\* Eccl. iii. 21, &c.

† Wisd. ix. 26.

Right to be so solicitous in a Dispute wherein CHAP. XVIII. they have no Share, excluding two of the Persons from having any thing to do in their Salvation.

IT remains then, that there is not that Disagreement between Reason and Faith objected by some, and as weakly yielded by other some; but a perfect good Understanding, Friendship, and Harmony between them; and that they are of mutual Service and sincere Benefit to each other.

IF Reason seeks the Religion of the End, which is so valuable, that it is desirous of knowing it better, and of finding out the best Means for performing it to the pleasing God, Faith is that obliging Friend offering that better Knowledge, and best Means; and Reason to prove itself what it is, accepts the Offer with all Thankfulness, and, to improve, and enjoy the Friendship as it ought, out of Love to the End so much clearer brought to Light, makes use of the Assistance of Faith as a Means only of what it offers itself, but still the best and only Means of pleasing God. And so the moral Obligation of the Law of Nature becomes Religious, and by believing also in Christ, becomes Christian, which is the Perfection of all Religion.

I. IF Reason is taken for the universal Law of Reason, implanted in the Hearts of all Men, directing what is Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, in all Relations of Persons, and Things, in their several Circumstances: The Christian Faith is so far from disagreeing with it, that it is its profess'd End and the declar'd Object of all its Efforts,

CHAP. XVIII. forts, as coming from the same heavenly Source of Light and Truth, to ratify all that kept to its true Original, and supply all that was wanting, or irregular through Corruption, or Tract of Time; and purposely to furnish the wanted, the most efficacious, admirable Means in all the World for carrying it into all the Perfection it is capable of in Life.

2. IF it is taken for the *Cause*, as *Ecc. vii. 25. I applied my Heart to seek out Wisdom and the Reason of Things; or the Ground or Motive of a Thing, as 1 Pet. iii. 15. Be ready to give an Answer to every Man that asketh you a Reason of the Hope that is in you*; there arises from Faith to this sort of Reason, all manner of Concord, Illustration, and Improvement. For in the moral Government of the World and the Truths relating to that (the Sphere of Truth, Cause and Effect, it especially confines itself to; after settling the Creation of the World, and the destroying Deluge, both creating a moral Dependence, it speaks of common natural Truths only popularly, and occasionally) it opens the FOUNTAIN of moral Causes, and their Effects; shews the Concatenation between moral Means and Ends, and the Advantage of the best Means to the best Ends; and for Grounds and Motives of Action, and Forbearance of Action, it produces and proffers the greatest and highest that can be offer'd: Whilst it exhibits the Grounds of its own Stability as firm as a Rock, and the Motives of its Persuasion to be the Strength of all Reason, that can ever be collected from the Truth of Record, or the Reason of Things. Was it deserted of Reason, it would sink into Credulity; but as it essentially founds itself upon rational As-

CHAP. XVIII. sent, it glories in the Name of Faith by maintaining itself to be the highest Reason; and therefore can never disagree with Reason, without disagreeing with itself. Thus when the Christian is order'd to be ready to give an Answer or Apology to every Man that asketh the Reason or Ground of the Hope that is in him, i. e. Remission of Sins, Access, and Acceptance with God, Resurrection of his Body and eternal Life; what surer or more satisfying, or more rational Ground can he set forth to others, or support himself with, than *Jesus Christ the Mediator*? By that Faith in him, he *sanctifies the Lord God in his Heart*, in all those Particulars.

3. IF it is taken for the *understanding Faculty*, as it apprehends, judges, and infers, as *Dan. iv. 36. My Reason return'd to me, i. e. my Understanding*; Christian Faith is the best Friend it has in the World; it amicably corrects it, when it exceeds itself, by advising to think soberly, and not more highly than it ought to think, nor to pretend to be wise above what is written; it dissipates Error and Vice which blinds and befools it, governing the Passions that prejudice or precipitate it; it opens a new Fountain of the choicest of all Knowledge for healing all its Master's Infirmities, and drinking thereat, may never thirst for other Remedies, there all its Powers are invited to regale themselves with what they naturally pant after; and encourages its discursive Faculties to examine themselves whether they are in the Faith, or out of the Influences of it; to search, try, prove, and disapprove, as they find it right so to do.

FOR it is the Understanding that discerns and judges what is the Mind of God, and though it is not the Measure of all Truth, yet it is, and must be the *Apprehender* of all that concerns us to know of divine Things, to give those Things their moral and divine Operation upon us. The Will can't chuse without Knowledge, nor does its work by way of Charm. The Faith requir'd of us is both a Rational and Fœderal Thing, and therefore must be the Result of the Understanding, as well as the Will; we, otherwise, assent and covenant to we know not what. It is Reason that brings us to Revelation, and satisfies us whether it really comes from God, or not; and that would still be as a Book altogether without Meaning, was it not address'd and subjected to its Capacity to find it out, comparing spiritual Things with spiritual, and in what Acceptation the Words are to be taken: whether Literal or Figurative; in what Latitude or Limitation; what the probable, what the certain Sense; what is to be inferr'd from; and how it concerns us. For though all Propositions and Facts therein are true, yet some concern us more than others, and some Persons more than others; nor is it necessary to be satisfied in all Doubts, any more than it is, to have *all* Controversies decided: whilst we are sure, those Truths concern us most of all, which have eternal Life or Death annex'd to them. For those Truths carry the Design of Christianity along with them upon our corresponding Endeavours; and whereupon the Spirit, which knows the Mind of God, has laid the chief Stress and Concern, Those should be chiefly respected by all Christian People. Thus Christianity maintains itself a reasonable Service,  
by

by requiring nothing in general to be believed, CHAP.  
that is contrary to Reason, nor any thing with VIII.  
explicit Particularity, that is above the Apprehension of it.

THE true Medium therefore is, to give to Faith the Things that are *Faith's*; in first bringing the Discovery of those heavenly divine Truths, which were *above* the Capacity of human Understanding to *have found out*, or have any manner of explicit Knowledge of, without the Assistance of Revelation. And to give to Reason the Things that are *Reason's*; in allowing it the Right of its Province and the Uses of its Function, in modestly enquiring, and usefully finding out the true Meaning of those reveal'd Truths.

MR. *Le Clerc* has shewn, *That the Defect of Reasoning is one of the Causes of INFIDELITY*\*. It certainly was the Cause of the Unbelief of our first Parents, and their Credulity of the *Devil*, the first Inlet of Sin; and ever since, all over the World, departing from Faith in the God of Truth, the Creator of the World, has been Man's Departure from his own Happiness. And as the Scope of God and his Truth is to bring us to Happiness, by true Reasoning and an honest Heart; the Defect of it, in believing a Lye for the sake of countenancing beloved Unrighteousness, may deservedly be branded with Obstinacy, Credulity, and Bigottry in Falshood and Sin. Archbishop *Tillot*. Sermon. *Heb. xi. 18, 19.* has finely shewn that the Excellency of *Abraham's* Faith, (the great Pattern of all Faith) was wholly owing to the strongest and justest Reasoning that ever could be, in the Case.

\* *Treatise of Incredulity*, pag. 63.



CHAP.  
XVIII.

For that to be sure was solid and unshagger'd Reasoning in him, which was so ready and able to reconcile two Revelations from God, which seem'd to clash with one another. To which may be added the *Centurion's* Faith, the Greatness of which exceeding all in *Israel*, was owing to the Greatness of his Reasoning. And indeed all true and strong Faith is true and strong Reasoning upon the Evidences of it: And the honest Heart that is a Friend and Improver of Reason from the Relation and Connection of Things, as the Author of Nature has fram'd, and Revelation discover'd them, is the true Friend of Faith; whilst *Enthusiasm*, *Sophistry*, and *Ridicule* are the greatest Enemies to Reason, betray their own Defects, and every Cause they undertake; and as long as they continue Adversaries to Reason, can have no true Friendship for Faith.

BUT such wretched *Sophistry* is the Author of *Christianity as old, &c.* guilty of, to the total Subversion of Faith, Sense, and Conscience, where he asserts, "Indeed it's an odd Jumble to prove the Truth of a Book by the Truth of the Doctrine it contains, and at the same time conclude those Doctrines to be true, because contain'd in that Book: And yet that is a Jumble every one makes, who contends for Mens being absolutely govern'd both by Reason, and Authority\*." By Authority he means *Revelation*, as he expresses himself a little above: "Now we Christians have two supreme, independent Rules, *Reason* and *Revelation*; and both require an absolute Obedience." For, is it not a great Fallacy to make those two

\* Pag. 164.

Rules

Rules both *supreme*, and *independent* of one another, when they are actually subordinate and dependent on each other, and accord in perfect Harmony and Friendship, in recommending one and the same End to all Men, who have Knowledge of the Revelation, and will truly pursue that End. What one calls the Happiness of Man, the other stiles the Salvation of the Soul, both meaning the same Thing. Reason is *subordinate* and dependent upon *Revelation*, in one Sense, and ought to be very thankful for discovering such glorious Doctrines, such heavenly and effectual Means for that End, which were *above* its Sphere ever to have found out, unassisted by the other. And *Revelation* is subordinate and dependent upon *Reason* in another Sense, by appealing to its Search and Inquiry into the Meaning of its Truths, and the Ends and Uses of its Doctrines.

I BEFORE join'd Issue with our Author upon his own *Criterion*, the internal Evidence, Fitness, and Goodness of the *peculiar* Doctrines or *Positives* of Christianity, upon which as a *Deist* he puts the whole Stress of his Cause, exclusive and in derision of the Evidence of Miracles, *viz.* Whether those Doctrines are *worthy to have God for their Author*, and are design'd for the *Good of Men*. When I treated of the *Sacraments*, and the *Mediator*, I appealed to Reason for the Wisdom and Goodness of those Institutions, in both Respects; and proved him a most unreasonable Writer in accusing God and Revelation of *Arbitrariness*, and that his Misrepresentations proceeded from his Ignorance, or Wickedness, or both. Where he turns *Sceptick* as to the external Evidence attesting the Conveyance of the Revelation,

CHAP. revelation, I shall answer him hereafter as a *Sceptick*.  
XVIII. But here he acts the *Deist* in rejecting Revelation,  
as an Authority incompatible with Reason.

Now what is the Authority of Revelation, but an Authority of Truth, Love, and Goodness, recommending itself to our Reason and Choice, from the God who created us for Happiness; who, being still desirous of it, when the Means fail'd through the Perverseness of Man, supplied such from Heaven, as should be effectual even to a greater Happiness, and put him in a new and better State of Probation than before, and again propound that to his Choice; to some People and Nations more explicitly than others? It does not offer to command Men for commanding sake, or to lead them blindfold, but by the evident Prospect of their own Happiness, and the Dread they ought to have of their own Misery; these two, the most sovereign and controuling Instincts of human Nature, are laid open before them, under the appointed *Captain* of Salvation; therefore so called because he *leads* all the Means, and is the Author and Finisher of that *Faith* which is the Means. When Reason, seeing abundant Evidence that it comes from God, and that such an immense Love and Goodness can have no other Author, submits accordingly to its own Interest and Benefit, is not the Authority, in that Case, of Reason's own *chusing* and *imposing*? How then is *such* an Authority inconsistent with Reason, when it is the highest Reason in the World to be govern'd by it absolutely, and without Reserve? And when the Rule of Reason and the Rule of Revelation are both obey'd, they both become co-ordinate to the same End, and Guide to the same Place. So perfectly well may a Man be absolutely

absolutely govern'd both by Reason, and by *such* CHAP.  
an Authority, at the same Time. XVIII.

AND as it makes frequent mention of God and his Attributes, it would be a just Objection, if every thing of such a Being was made level to human Comprehension (could that be done) any farther than was useful to our present State, which might easily be done, and is done. Therein if there are some Truths necessary to the Salvation of the Believer, which unassisted Reason could have discover'd, a Suspicion might arise of all being an *human* Invention; but as the heavenly Sublimity of its Love and Benefits surpasses all its Invention, has not Reason the firmer Ground to believe it came from thence, seeing the Contrivance, and Discovery so well agree with every Perfection that rules there?

HE says it is an "odd Jumble, to prove the Truth of a Book by the Truth of the Doctrines it contains; and at the same Time to conclude these Doctrines to be true, because contain'd in that Book." But the Jumble lay in his own Brains, that could put such a Fallacy upon himself, or offer it to others. He might know what every body acknowledges, that the Proof of the Truth of the Book does not wholly depend upon the internal Evidence of the Truth of the Doctrine contain'd; but external Evidence of other Truths concur, and are expected by every Inquirer, to co-attest, and complete the Proof of the Truth of the Book. A curious Searcher will not be contented with one, without the other; the former serves to satisfy, that there is no Objection from the Falshood or Unreasonableness of the Contents, to proceed to a further

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CHAP. XVIII. ther Inquiry (as is the Case of *Mabometan*, and the constant Objection to every false Revelation.) And as those Doctrines depend upon the Truth of Matters of Fact so many Years ago, which depend upon the Truth of History; and the extrinſick Testimony of the Record must be consulted by every one who would be *fully* satisfied, and have an entire Conviction of the Truth of the Book, to rely upon. And when that is relied upon, then the contained Doctrines receive a farther Confirmation of their native Truth, from the external Ratification of the Authority of the Book: the Doctrines are not truer or more reasonable in themselves afterwards, than before; but they are of more Authority after than before, and the Receiver of that Authority makes the Truth surer than before; and so oblige all reasonable Men both upon account of their intrinſick Reasonableness, and also upon account of the Divine Author they proceed from. But the Deists are so unreasonable, as not to admit the Truth neither of the Book, nor its Doctrines, upon either of the Evidences, single, or together.

WHAT he argues in the same Page, is equal Sophistry and Impertinence: "If you are to be govern'd by Revelation, that supposes you must take every thing on Trust; or merely because it is said by those, for whose Dictates you are to have an implicit Faith: For to examine into the Truth of what they say, is renouncing their Authority; as on the contrary, if Men are to be govern'd by their Reason, they are not to admit any thing further than as they see it reasonable. To suppose both consistent, is to suppose it consistent to take, and not to take, Things on Trust. To receive

CHAP. XVIII. "receive Religion on the Account of Authority CHAP. XVIII. "supposes, that if the Authority promulgated "a different Religion we should be obliged "to receive it." To examine into the Truth and Reasonableness of what they say, who deliver the Truths of Revelation, is so far from *renouncing* their Authority, that it is a submitting to it, where they expressly invite, and require us to examine, try, prove, search, and judge for ourselves what is right; so that taking Things on Trust, is trusting our own Reason to understand the Meaning, and the Uses, and to make Application to the End. And to imagine that "if the Authority promulgated a different Religion, we should be obliged to receive it," is to suppose God perfect and imperfect, true and false. However it is no hard Supposition upon them, that if he should promulgate the same Religion, with a new Set of Miracles, and the *Deists* be present at the Working of them, that the greatest Part of them would be what they are, Unbelievers. The Reasons of which will appear afterwards.

No Principle of Reason contradicts any Article of Faith; they are both Truths, and one certain Truth never clashes with another certain Truth, but ever harmonize together by an eternal Property and Prerogative of proceeding from the same Source, the God of Truth; who can neither contradict himself, nor make Contradictions true. What is the Meaning of St. Paul's *natural Man not receiving the Things of the Spirit* was shewn before, and appears to be no manner of Objection against carnal Reason, or Reason dwelling in Flesh, being capable of understanding

CHAP. XVIII. what concerns us in the Scripture; weak as it is, it must be admitted, because we have no other Faculty to arrive at the Knowledge of it, and God requires its Application for that purpose. Nor is that Precaution, *Beware lest any Man spoil you through Philosophy and vain Deceit*\*, any Exception; for that Philosophy, as the Place shews, was such as tended to lead Men from the Doctrine of Christ, by leading them after the *Traditions of Men, after the Rudiments of the World*, current in those Days; that sort is indeed vain Deceit, endless Genealogies, Science falsely so call'd. Besides these two Scriptures there is nothing to countenance; and those are nothing to the Purpose of screening the Abusers, and Misrepresenters both of Faith, and Reason.

SEEING then there is a strict Alliance, and perpetual Confederacy, sacred and inviolable, between Reason and Faith; they must be Enemies to themselves, to God, and Man, to the Rights of human Understanding, and to the Prosperity of *Christ's* Kingdom, who endeavour to pick a Quarrel between them, and strive to set them at Variance. Such are

I. THE *Papists*; they declare open War against Reason; Why? But because the whole System of *their* Faith, as such, is compacted of the most pernicious and destructive Corruptions of the Faith of *Christ*; ruining the Life and Design of that Religion of the Means for carrying on the Religion of the End, by frequently, and most traiterously murdering this last, even all the

\* 2 Col. ii. 8.

Laws of God concerning the Ends of Religion, CHAP. XVIII. for the sake of propagating and enlarging the Worldly Carcass of the Means of their Debauching; being the most apparent, notorious, idolatrous Traitors in his mediatorial Kingdom, by setting up other Mediators of Intercession beside him, and almost wholly to the Neglect of him.

NOR does it at all mend the Matter, that they add to the End of such Prayers, *through Jesus Christ*: because that plainly confesses, and irreligiously presumes, in the Face of Jesus Christ, that he is not the *one sufficient* Intercessor; nor the *only ordain'd*; nor the *only capable* Mediator of being pray'd to, or of taking *Cognizance* of Prayers: Does not the joining other Intercessors with him, actually commit all those Injuries against him? And if he is believ'd not to be a *sufficient* Intercessor, as he really is, and they dare not deny; to neglect him as *such*, is the same Thing as to neglect and frustrate his Intercession altogether.

THE two grand Engines they successively play against Reason and Faith in their gainful Plot against both, are *Infallibility*, and *Transubstantiation*; and by their Manner of working them it is very plain, they allow Men the Use, neither of Reason, nor Faith; but purely, and solely to bring them into their Church, and keep them there. The first leading Artifice of the skulking Kidnappers, the Missionaries, is to ensnare the *intended* Convert with a solemn Promise of *Secrecy*, not to communicate the clear, unsuspected Kindness offered by a *Stranger*, to either Father, Mother, Friend, or Minister, till they have wholly embraced it: The next is to appeal to the Party's Reason, and perhaps to a Text in Scrip-



CHAP. ture, 1 *Tim.* iii. 15. the *Church* being Pillar of  
XVIII. *Truth*, which they dexterously pervert, if the  
other happens not to understand it; and then  
craftily arguing and sophistically syllogizing him  
into a Necessity of having an *infallible* Certainty of  
Faith, (and under that, always comes in their pe-  
remptrory Exclusion of all Protestants from Sal-  
vation, and the Protestants allowing a Possibility  
of it with them; an Argument that does not in  
the least concern the Truth, but the different  
*Temper* or *Charity* of the Doctrine of one, or  
p'other altogether) which their Church has the Im-  
pudence to assume, and the Protestants the Vir-  
tue to disclaim; being a Prerogative that ap-  
pertains not to us Mortals neither severally, nor  
in a collective Capacity; nor is it communicable  
to any Creature: the *Infallibility* of always un-  
derstanding, and always *choosing* what is eternally  
right belong only unto God himself\*. The An-  
gels, fallible in Understanding, mutable in Will,  
for that reason are not clean and tight in the  
Sight, or comparison of the *One* Infallible, *Sole*  
Immutable Deity. If human Infallibility there-  
fore can be no better than a broken Reed to de-  
pend on, what makes them such Fools to quarrel  
among themselves, who shall have the keeping  
of it?

AFTER he has once embraced *that kind* of  
Faith, and surrender'd up his Reason, they have  
no longer Occasion for it; he is led blindfold ever  
after, his *Senses* as well as Reason fall a credulous  
blind Sacrifice to *Transubstantiation*. The Belief  
of which Impossibility completely subverts the

\* What sort of certainty our Faith admits of, see next  
Head, *Moral Virtue* of Faith.

Proof

CHAP. Proof of Miracles, the great external Evidence  
XVIII. of Christianity, *Acts* i. 3. stiling such Appeals to  
Sense and Reason, *infallible Proofs*; and subverts  
likewise the Evidence of the Being of God,  
which supposes the common Reasoning it out from  
the infallible Certainty of *seeing* his Handy-works  
in the Frame of the World. And as soon as his  
Faith is strong enough to swallow *that*, with-  
out choaking Belief, it is presently set at  
nought, and (as well it might) becomes  
weak and impotent, not able to save them;  
but the *Merit* of Works steps up to do that Job:  
and if they are not inclinable to those Works  
themselves, there is *Stock* enough in the Church  
to be purchased; and the greatest Rascal of them  
all, with the Priest's Absolution, and Extreme  
Unction, is sure of going to Heaven. Thus  
Faith in the *Pope* and his Church, with little or  
no Regard to any in Christ, without Sense, Rea-  
son, or Gospel, becomes a Fool's Paradise  
upon Earth. And so their Faith is entirely an  
*human* Faith, resting, not upon God, or his  
Word, (being shut out from the Inspection of  
that) but on Man, upon a Cabal of Impostors,  
for the Salvation of their Souls. In the ruling  
Part of which Faith, the Spirit of the World  
wholly steers, and will steer the Mystery of Ini-  
quity, that very gainful Absurdity, as long as  
thick Darkness and Ignorance, Slavery of Mind,  
and Extinction of Reason is contented to obey,  
and deceive itself with the *Name* of Christianity,  
Piety, and Catholick, without the Reality or  
Integrity of any one of them. For *Ecclesiastical*  
Christianity with them is quite a different Thing  
from the *New Testament*, real, pure Christianity;  
whilst truly *Clerical*, *Protestant*, *Evangelical*  
Christianity agree in one, are all one and the same;

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though

CHAP. XVIII. though in some Places, perhaps intermixt with some small Frailties of human Judgment.

Thus the *disguised Papist* in Protestant Countries, makes his Advantage of the other Extreme of Reason, in *Excess*, as, at home, he does of Reason in *Defect*. And that Church, and the *Missionary* from it, find their Interest and Account, in playing into the Hand of *Atheism*, *Deism*, and *Scepticism*, with a Wink, sily, but faithfully promoting them what they can: And these, overwitted by those Layers-in-wait, play into the others Hand unknowingly, and are in a true Disposition to become Profelytes \*.

For

\* None, in Fact, are more credulous Bigots than modern Infidels; they strain at the Gnat of wholesome Religion the saving Gospel, and swallow a Camel, i. e. as great a Load of Absurdities as a Camel can carry. Take a Specimen from a few: They deny both the *Interposition*, and the *Vengeance* of God; yet let them dig where they will in any Hill, or Vale upon Earth (if *Teneriff* says nothing, it is because it is agreed upon the View, to be a *Post deluvian* Hill, sprung up from an Earthquake) undeniable Relicks, and Spoils of the prevailing *Deluge* stare them in the Face; in promiscuous *Trees*, *Shells*, *Skeletons* of Fish and Animals subsiding in Countries absolute Strangers to them. Yet they pleasantly maintain that none of the Punishments of God are *final*, but all for Correction of the Offender. Then, seeing the Memory and Monuments of a Flood over the highest Mountains (probably 15 Cubits according to Revelation) cannot be buried, they grant you a *partial* Deluge, wise Philosophers as they are! and so most absurdly believe, that Water can climb up Hill, and by Miracle be suspended in the Air, to make their *partial* Deluge: Whereas, by their own Concession, if it has covered the highest Mountain, it must by its *own Nature*, and without an interposing Miracle, cover all Hills, and consequently all Habitations in the World. So ridiculously do they go about to evade one Miracle by believing a much greater.

They believe God has a World of Goodness in him, so far as to oblige him to confer upon them all the Happiness their Nature is capable of; they feel and confess the Imperfection and

CHAP. XVIII. For the two Extremes having no regard to the Medium, where the true Religion only lies, produce each other. Over-believing or Credulity in *Popish* Mysteries, contrary to all Rule and Reason of believing, when it perceives its Folly, naturally produces No-believing, which is equally contrary to the same Rule and Reason of believing: And No-believing, or Infidelity, when tired and sick of itself, for want of some Rule to guide its fluctuating bewilder'd State, as naturally runs into the other Extreme, in order to compensate for its former Fault. How true in Fact is it, that Popery, in its warmest Nest in *Italy*, hatches plenty of *Deists*, some adorned with the *red Hat*, some with a *Triple Crown* \*.

"It is certain, says Bishop *Burnet* in his Travels, that in *Italy*, Men of searching Understanding, who have no other Idea of the Christian Religion, but that which they see receiv'd among them, are very naturally tempted to disbelieve it quite; for they believing it all alike in gross, without Distinction, and finding such notorious Cheats as appear in many Parts of their Religion, are upon that induc'd to disbelieve the Whole." In the Vulgar it generates little more than the old Deism of *Europe* in a new Edition of Tutelar Mediators; in

and Disorders of their present Nature; yet they wont suffer him to interpose or reveal any Remedy, or prescribe the least Thing to mend their Condition; they would be well, but they will take nothing!

They deny the *positive, judicial* Distribution of future Rewards and Punishments, incredible monstrous Persuasion! yet confess the Providence of God ruling over this *unequal* Scene of Things.

Can *Transubstantiation* be more insufferable than these Beliefs, or betray more Credulity?

\* *Quantum profuit nobis hæc Fabula Christi?*

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CHAP. the better sort, *modern* Deism. And how easily  
 XVIII. is the *East* \* and *West India* Deism turn'd into  
 ~~~~~ *Popery*, having so near a Resemblance to one  
 another?

AND after the true Religion for another World and the Favour of God is rejected by them, which is the true Medium of believing, and also the *Protestant* System; some publick Religion must exist, and a worldly Religion, that of *Papists*, presenting itself, they are, when the proper Turn comes, and the Infection has generally spread itself, ripe for it: for indeed *such* a Religion exactly fits them; the Deists can still retain what they set their Heart upon, the Love of their Sins, which they know in their Conscience was the sole Reason of disliking the Religion of Protestants: both these they retain with a good Grace; Popish Faith even countenancing and dispensing with them in it, by easy Pardons and Indulgences: and in running down the Protestant Way of Salvation by depreting the Holy Scriptures as a Rule of Life and Salvation, the Papists vie, and concur with them. A boundless Licentiousness of Practice, such as

* Vid. *Varen. descript Reg. Japon.* pag. 200. As to the *West Indies*, the Similitude of *Inhumanity* is notoriously confessed by the best Writers of their own Travels. The Inhabitants of *Mexico* and *Peru* offer'd up incredible Multitudes of human Sacrifices in the most bloody Manner, to their Gods and Mediators; and the *Spaniards*, no less bloody, sacrificed Millions of those Innocents to their *Saints* and false Mediators; whilst the true Mediator forbid it with the utmost Abomination. *Cortes* the Conqueror of *Mexico*, according to *Purchas's* Collection, pag. 990, pull'd down the *Images* of their *Saints*, and in their Room set up that of the *Virgin Mary*. Where you may find a Parallel between the *Mexican Pagan Fryars*, *Nuns*, &c. and the modern *Popish* Superstitions of that sort.

the

the Deists glory in, whenever it becomes National, is moreover naturally and methodically disposed (supposing Abbey-Lands out of the Question) to seek its ease, in exchanging that publick Religion which gives no Quarter, or the least Indulgence to their Vices, for that flattering *Public Superstition* which commutes for them at an easy Price, and continues the Hopes of Heaven.

So fatal to *our Publick*, and to every Individual of it, is unbounded Liberty in Principle, and Practice! So perpetually seasonable, and profitable is the Controul of Scripture, and Reason!

How jealous then in common Policy, should *Protestant* Powers be of the spreading, or in the least countenancing such lewd, unreasonable, unsociable Dissolutions, and Contradictions of their own true Faith of Christ? Since they are in undeniable Danger of losing the *Heart* and *Conscience* of every Subject converted to the other Religion. Though the *Supremacy* of the Pope is denied in Temporals, yet it is universally acknowledged by all of that Persuasion in *Spirituals*, for the *Extirpation* of *Hereticks*, *i. e.* Protestants. Their Heart and Aversion will ever be the same, and nothing but the Want of Power, and the presiding Favour of God and Christ disappoints them of it; and every sincere Protestant should moreover endeavour to prevent it, by the mild Ways and Reasons of his Religion, for the sake of *Christ*, and the Prosperity of his Kingdom; because every such Convert is a Subject likewise lost to his *mediatorial Kingdom*.

I A M

I AM the more confirm'd in this Observation from a Passage in Dr. *Clark*. "But above all, the greatest and most effectual Means that we can possible use to prevent the Growth of Popery and Superstition, is to be infinitely careful not to run into that Atheism and profane Libertinism, which is the contrary Extreme to Superstition. For as unreasonable Superstition enslaves the Minds of Men, and makes them so uneasy under the Yoke, that they often fly off into the contrary Extreme of Irreligion and Profaneness; so the natural Effect of Profaneness, when Men see the intolerable Consequences and Mischiefs of it, is to drive weak Minds into the other Extreme of Superstition. If therefore while we fly from the Superstition of Popery, we run into the Contempt of *all* Religion; that profane Libertinism will probably terminate in Popery again *." "The patronizing such a *blind Faith*, naturally tends to a *total Infidelity*; as a *total Infidelity* tends reciprocally to the Support of such a *blind Faith* and *implicit Subjection*." "Will they not be carried away, by Inclination and worldly Hopes and Fears, to turn *Infidels* first, and then *implicit Believers*? first to believe *nothing*, that they may with the more Grace profess to believe *every Thing*," according to the present Bishop of *Winchester* †.

2. THE *Solifidians* and other Sectaries in devious Notions of the Christian Faith, dangerously mistake, and disturb the Harmony and

* *Posthum. Serm.* Vol. VI. pag. 388. † See his Tracts from pag. 498, to 502.

Subordination,

Subordination, which God and his Gospel have establish'd between that Faith, and the eternal Law of Reason; by exalting the former, which is but a Duty of the Means, upon the Ruins and Contempt of the perpetual Duty of the latter: As if there could be any Value or Virtue in the *Means* unapplied to, or ineffective of the End it was purposely ordained to produce, and so clearly proclaimed to be subordinate to the Accomplishment of. But this more properly belongs to another Subject, the true Christian Intention and Design of that Faith, where it is embraced.

3. THE *Deists* and others are guilty of making an open Rupture between Reason and Faith; by flattering and exalting naked unassisted Reason to an *Excess*, beyond the Conditions of Humanity, and contrary to the common Sentiments of the Wisest, and almost the general Voice of Mankind; who have been all sensible of a Degeneracy in their moral Powers, and the Want of some Redress. And now that complete Redress of, and Consolation to, all those disquieting Ailments is come down from Heaven, and has display'd its healing Virtues and Uses, it must be very unkind and ungrateful to ply all its Force and Efforts, or play any conceited Artifice, Sophistry, or Ridicule against its best and truest Friend; that brings Knowledge to its Ignorance, and Relief to its Doubts, perfect Peace and Reconciliation between Enemies; and, if there is not a Fault on one Side, mutual Love and Complacency, the original Felicity of our Being. The Wickedness and Folly of which Proceeding will better appear under the next Head.

III. The

III. *The moral Virtue of Faith.*

TAKING Faith in the Sense before describ'd, I proceed to shew how it is a moral Virtue, or what Share the Will of Man has in it, which makes him accountable to God for his Faith. It must be acknowledg'd on all Hands, that the original, permanent Use of our Faculties, Understanding, Will, and Affections is, to assist us to attain the true End of Man, Happiness in this Life, and that which is to come. And it cannot be denied, that the Will is the *ruling* Faculty over all the rest, and, the Light of the Understanding being at hand and very much at its Command, constitutes it the *moral* Agent in every Man; for every Man has the Argument of *Experience* within himself superior to all the Subtleties of Dispute, that he can freely chuse, or refuse, after all is said and done, with respect to the Object laid before him; and be as certain of that *Man-moving, self-determining* Power in all his moral Actions, as he is of Motion; tho' he is not able to answer the super-refin'd impertinent Objections against it.

NOR is there any outward Restraint upon his Liberty, but what he has the Freedom to throw off; nor yet any inward Hindrance or Fetters put upon it, but what is of his own occasioning; excepting always one Restraint, which he is not, nor ought not to be free from, and that is a Determination to *Good*: because that is the Perfection of Human Liberty and Choice as it derives from God, and is the Liberty of God himself,

self, as I have before shewn*: Nor is there any other *Fate* upon Man (the Fate of God himself if it may be so express'd) excepting that hard Condition of being conditionally fated to his own Happiness according to the Circumstances and Opportunities put in his Power; and, in order to render it *his* Happiness, is still left to the Option of his own Choice, and the Result of his own Endeavours.

THE Deists allow this Fate and Destiny to Happiness, but in a very absurd Sense; they oblige God to confer all the Happiness upon Man *his Nature is capable of*, not as a Gift they would thank him for, or a *Reward* of his promising, but *necessarily* due to their Behaviour; and so, they profoundly think, they secure and can extort Happiness, whilst they indulge themselves in the Neglect of some of the *proper* Conditions, and Qualifications. But God without Dominion including the Dependence of his Creatures upon his Will, and without subsequent Providence distributing Rewards and Punishments proportion'd to Deeds, and so appearing before all the World to distinguish the Good from the Bad, is nothing else but *Fate* or *Nature*, or some other *insignificant Name* exclusive of *Governor*. But it is in vain to think of flattering or persuading him out of his righteous Government in giving eternal Life only in *Christ Jesus*, and denying it to those who *knowingly reject* him.

THE Author of *Christianity as old, &c.* resolving, as he says, *to go to the Bottom of this Matter*, gives in this Account of Faith. "Faith

* Page 26. of this Vol.

" consider'd

CHAP. XVIII. "consider'd in itself can neither be a Virtue, or a Vice, because Men can no otherwise believe than as Things appear to them: Nay, can there be an higher Affront to God than to suppose, he requires Men to judge otherwise than the Faculties he has given them, enable them to do? Or what can be more absurd than to imagine, that God will shew his Favour to one for believing what he could not believe; and his Displeasure to another for not believing what he could not believe? And therefore Faith is only to be esteem'd by the Works it produces; for the strongest Faith may be worse than no Faith at all. *The Devils themselves* (who are held the most wicked Beings in the Universe) *believe and tremble* *." This indeed is going to the Bottom of Infidelity.

In answer to which, it is readily own'd, that the Understanding Faculty is passive in perceiving and judging of Truth, nor can it do otherwise than perceive and judge natural, or moral Truth, as it appears to it; any more than the Eye of the Body can help seeing and distinguishing its Objects when they are before it. Nevertheless, it is perfectly certain, that the Will has that controuling Power, as over the Eye of the Body, so over the Eye of the Mind, to turn it from one Object to another, and view one more attentively than another, just as it is, or is not, agreeable to it; it can divert the Understanding from perceiving or judging, by recommending other Objects to employ it; it can withdraw the Attention so soon, that the Per-

* Page 44.

ception

CHAP. XVIII. "ception will be slighted and transient, and the Judgment cursory and precipitate; it can suspend, or wholly deny the Efforts of the Passions and Members, which are the Executioners of its Pleasure, its Courtiers and Servants in daily Waiting; so that there *shall be Eyes, and yet they see not, and Ears, and yet they hear not*: Or, if it has the Curiosity to be more exactly inform'd of the Matter through the other's Inspection and Discernment, it can sincerely continue the Search longer, or renew the Enquiry oftner: Still after Judgment given, and after it can't help joining in an assent of Approbation, it may nevertheless suspend or hinder all effectual assent of Application, or Determination of the executive Powers and Affections to proper Word, and Deed. It may be convinc'd perhaps for the present, and yet nothing suitable follow the Conviction, for want of *Probity* of Mind, call'd in Scripture, *an honest and good Heart* (the Heart being therein assign'd as the Faculty of effectual believing) for entertaining the Truth in the *Love of its Design* and Purpose, for *renewing* the Mind, and all the bad Actions proceeded from it, *with the HEART Man believeth unto Righteousness*; according to *Solomon, incline thine HEART to understand*. I own therefore, there is no Virtue in this sort of speculative Perceiving, Judging, or Inferring belonging to believing, no more than in doing the same ever so rightly with respect to any Object in Astronomy. This is but the *opus operatum*, the mere Carcass of Faith without any thing of the Spirit or Soul of perceiving, judging, or inferring. *Οὐδὲ, ἡ ἀρετὴ, καὶ κακία ἐν πείσει, ἀλλὰ ἐν ἐνεργείᾳ*, M. Anton.

* Rom. x. 10.

Vol. II.

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Lib.

CHAP. Lib. IX. 16. *Neither Virtue nor Vice consist in XVIII. speculative Persuasion, but practical Efforts.*

THE Virtue then, and then only commences, when the *Will*, knowing the Intention and Business such Truths and Doctrines have with it, receives them not with a simple Assent, or Approbation, as to Matter of Fact of the Truths, but with a *chosen* Inclination, cherishing Approbation or Persuasion, with a *cordial* Application corresponding, and effectual to the other Purpose; not to doubtful Disputation, but in a *pure Conscience*; *perceiving* who recommends, and commands, and for what Intention; *judging* how reasonable the Obedience, how incomparably excellent to its true Interest; *inferring* the necessary Duty, Salvation, Self-preservation, and eternal Happiness in it; resolving to cleave steadfastly to it, and hold it fast; and in that Resolution to profess it openly. And accordingly enter into publick Engagement and solemn Covenant so to do; plighting, renewing, and repeating Fœderal Faith and Personal Fidelity, to continue in that good Faith and do the good Works of it; so making that, which was obligatory before, still more uniformly obliging, and more constantly binding to the whole Behaviour; in order to be entitled to the inestimable Benefits and Promises of the New Covenant or Testament between God and sinful Man, founded in the Mediator of that Covenant, and Testator of that Testament, *Jesus Christ* our Lord and Saviour.

BESIDES as the great Archetype of Virtue, the Image of God in Man, consists in his Conformity more to the *Will* than the understanding Faculty

Faculty of God, it must be improved more here CHAP. XVIII. from the Virtues of *our Will*, than the Enlargement of our Understanding; which is rather our posthumous Privilege, than a necessary Duty in this imperfect State of Perception.

IT is not the believing that the Nature of Virtue is so and so constituted, or consists in such or such Particulars, that ever makes a Man virtuous; or that Proposition, *that Jesus Christ is the Messiah*, which makes an upright Believer; unless it intentionally comprehends and is actually unfolded to his several Offices. *Burnet de Fid. & Off.* pag. 151, acknowledges *that* to be but an imperfect, and no more than an inceptive Principle of Christianity, and that the Need of a *Mediator, Intercessor, and Redeemer* is founded in the Degeneracy of human Souls. Nor does an Historical believing his Presence in the World, teaching Doctrines, working Miracles, Dying, Rising, Ascending to Heaven, *merely* as a matter of Fact, constitute the requisite Faith; for that is a mechanical Faith unavoidable in a Christian Country, more fully incident to the believing *Devils*, than to the Half-embracers and Half-rejecters of it upon Earth: Though they assent *strongly* and perceive so clearly, they perceive nothing in it, but the Inflammation of their own Doom, they judge and infer nothing but the eternal Despair of being the worse for the same, Cause enough to make them tremble; and is it not a devilish Folly for any, either by hating, or not using it, to make their Faith as fatal to themselves as it is to the other? Have they not Reason to tremble?

CHAP.
XVIII.

IT is therefore, notwithstanding it is the *Gift of God* as to the Object of it *, *an active Persuasion of the Mind in a fruitful Application of that Means unto Virtue*, that makes it Virtue or Christian Faith; whether that Persuasion regards the different States of another World, more especially the Recompence of Reward, or Trust in God's Promises and Providences; or respects the Forgiveness of Sins, Acceptance of our Prayers and sincere Endeavours thro' the Mediator. If the Persuasion of the Mind regards the *Lawfulness* of an Action it is called Faith, and whatsoever religious Action is not of *that sort* of Faith, is *Sin* †; *to him that thinketh any Thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean*. When a Man does what his well-inform'd Conscience tells him is unlawful, he is self-condemn'd and *self-divided*, which is an *internal Heresy*, let him be of what particular Church he pleases.

Now the End and Design of the Christian Institute of the Knowledge of Christ, or Faith in him as Mediator, being to *renew the Mind* in a better Knowledge of the Religion of the End, and an explicit Knowledge of the only true Religion of the Means, in order to regulate Man's whole Conversation in the Sight of God; and to effect that in the first Source of that Conversation, towards rectifying and governing the Will in its moral Choice and Election, and directing it in its Application of the Means to the End; the Treasures of the Wisdom of God in

* Eph. ii. 8. 1 Cor. ii. and in many other Places stands for the Object, Acts vi. 7. Rom. i. 5. xvi. 26. iii. 27, 31. x. 6. Gal. i. 23. iii. 2, 23, 25. Eph. iv. 5. 1 Tim. iv. 6. † Rom. xiv. 23.

him

him are display'd to the Understanding as the *most important Truth*; and the Will is likewise address'd to as the *most important Interest*. If the Proposal, in all its Necessaries, is very plain, and the Understanding can't help perceiving and judging, that the Meaning of the Truth is moral, and the Design saving, it is by so much the greater Commendation of it, as it is not a Matter of Subtlety, but Sincerity and Honesty to be a Christian, which depends chiefly upon the Will; tho' there is no Virtue in *physically* believing the Truth as Truth, which upon due Attention and Inquiry can't but be believed and assented to; yet to believe and assent to it *morally*, and embrace it with the *Will*, is Virtue and Duty, and the very first Principle of Virtue. "For this Reason, Virtue, which is the proper Happiness and Perfection, is call'd *ἀρετή*, i. e. *αἰρετή*, a Name which hath great Affinity to a Word that signifies *eligible*, not only because Virtue is properly the Object, but also because it is the Effect of our own *Choice*." *Simplic. on Epiſt. c. i.*

As the Truth is an enlightning Principle of Piety, Virtue, and all Morality, the Will can help, as it too commonly does, receiving it to *that Use and Purpose*, whilst the Understanding could not help receiving and acknowledging it as Truth: And therefore when the elective Power of the Mind entertains and applies it as such, it must be its Virtue and Commendation; and consequently not to do so, must be wicked and immoral: It is called *Mark vii. 22. ἀφροσύνη Foolishness*, destructive Imprudence; when a Person knows better Things but follows them not, *which proceeds from the Heart and defiles the Man*.

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For

CHAP. XVIII. For Piety and Virtue being a moral Obligation upon the Will, as the indispensable Qualification of Man's Happiness; the Truth and Application of the Means, without which that Obligation can't be duly put in Practice, is morally obligatory upon the Will also: If one is a Duty, so is the other; if one is necessary, so is the other. Thus Truth in the Understanding distinguishing true Good from false, in the only true *Doctrine*, and *Instruction* of Happiness, (the chief Enquiry after Truth) is chosen, and embraced in the Aspect of being its *Good*, with a careful Regard to those Resolutions it would bring in, whereon Happiness depends, *i. e.* for *Reproof*, for *Correction* in Righteousness.

If Faith is a Conclusion of a Syllogism for true Happiness, and that Conclusion, as such, depends in part upon the Understanding; then Faith consists in the *Fidelity* of all the Powers constitutive of the inward Man, Understanding, Will, and Affections, to Truth constitutive of Man's Happiness, called in *Luke viii. 15.* the *best and Good Heart* (a Word that comprehends those three Faculties) *best*, as void of Prevarication, free from Excuses, Self-delusion; *good*, as Self-determin'd to Self-Salvation, his own greatest Good, and to the Love thereof; and if the Excellency of it so much consists in *Fidelity*, it must certainly be a *moral Virtue*. In the Understanding that Fidelity becomes the *Guide of Life*; in the Intentions *Sincerity*; in the Affections *Purity*; in the Will a *Choice* and *Determination* cleaving to the *Reward* of Virtue. For as every Word and Deed derives its Character of Virtue before God, from the Bent and Preference of the *Will*; it is not the knowing, assenting, or approving

approving Duty in the Understanding that makes CHAP. XVIII. Virtue, but by reducing it into Practice by the effectual Determination of the Will. The Virtue then of these sort of Men, like the *Gnosticks* of old, seems to consist chiefly in *knowing*, despatching, and talking of it, and talking every body else out of the true Way to that, and Happiness. They appear contented Candidates for Heaven in the Province of Knowledge and Notion, desirous of no other Proficiency in Virtue, than the *scientifick* Stage of it, according to the Heathen *Lucilius*.

Virtus est hominis, SCIRE id, quod quæque habeat res.

Virtus, SCIRE, homini, rectum, utile, quid sit honestum,

Quæ bona, quæ mala item, quid inutile, turpe, honestum.

Virtus, quærendæ finem rei SCIRE, modumque

WHEN Faith is obedient to the End, as the Means and the moral Cause of producing it, whoever would obey the Religion of the End to the best of his Power, must conform to the Religion of the Means according as it falls into his Power, and arrives at his Knowledge: The moral Obligation to one is unquestionable, therefore the moral Obligation to the other should as little be brought in question, since Christianity has been proved to be a Scheme of the best Means to that End. Nor is it possible, duly considering the Nature of God, or Man, for any Man to assign a better, or any so well adapted, in itself, to the compassing of that End.

BUT what if *Faith* is the first Principle, and Basis of Natural Religion as well as reveal'd; and without it, there is a *moral Impossibility* of *pleasing God*? That *God is, and is a Rewarder of those that diligently seek to please him*, is the Creed of Nature; and if a Believer in God does not exert his Faith to that moral Relation between God and Man, as a *Rewarder* of sincere Diligence in serving him, he cannot *possibly*, as it is very natural to imagine, be the Servant of God, or God be otherwise pleas'd with him.

THOUGH the Believer of God's Existence should be mistaken as to some of his natural Perfections, yet keeping his Faith and Reason up to the religious Aspect of being a *Rewarder*, that secures all his *moral* Attributes; and actually exerts them, in some indeterminate Manner, in his Government over Man. His *Veracity* in keeping *Promise*, whence the Notion of Rewarder implanted in Man's Reason had its Confirmation from Heaven from the Beginning, before *Adam* was turn'd out of Paradise; his *Mercy*, *Goodness*, and *Love*: And his being a *Punisher* necessarily included in the other, secures and exerts his *Holiness*, and *Justice* towards the Transgressor. And that lays an *implicit* Foundation for the Love and Fear of God, and all moral Obedience. And therefore they who reject the explicit, have nothing but *implicit* Faith to rely upon, which they take so much self-condemning Pains to deride. But the Author I reply to (more especially one of them) take a more effectual Step, and do the Work at once; in order to supplant Christianity, they subvert and tear Natural Religion up by the Roots; by rejecting God as a *Rewarder*,

warder, the general, common, natural Principle of all Virtue and Hope of Acceptance, they effectually reject all his moral Attributes, and cancel all moral and religious Obligation to him.

NOW, does not *Christianity* reveal and unfold that Faith, and render it *explicit* in all those Particulars; *how*, and for what Reason, and upon whose Account, he is a Rewarder, and Pardoners, and Acceptor of our Worship, and Service; and *how* and in what prescribed Method of the Divine Wisdom all those moral Attributes are to have their governing Influence, and take Effect upon us? And if the other *implicit* Faith, wrapt up in Generals, was morally Obligatory, surely *this explicit* Faith must be much more so, as being so much more satisfactory, and particular. This gives an immediate adequate Explanation of the Bishop of *Bangor* (now *Salisbury's* Passage of Sermon before the *Society for propagating the Gospel* as cited by the Author of *Christianity as old*, &c. pag. 68. where the Gospel is stiled a *Republication of the Law of Nature*. I persuade myself his *Lordship* had these original Truths in his View when he express'd himself in that Manner, of which the other has taken such Advantage; with this Key, the Assertion bears quite another Meaning, than as it is used and adopted by that Author and brought into Title; for indeed the Gospel requiring Repentance in virtue of its Explanation of the first *Promise*, in its *Precepts* must be *declarative* likewise of that *original Religion*, of the End, which was as *old* as the *Creation*, the Breach of which Law of Nature was to be repented of.

At the same Time we know and believe how God is a Rewarder, we know how is a *Punisher*; and if this Faith employ'd to its proper Ends is absolutely necessary, where-ever it is sufficiently reveal'd, to gain Acceptance with God and prevent the other Inconvenience; then it becomes Self-preservation, the Transgression of which Law is certainly a very great Sin: And I hope *Self-preservation* will be allow'd to be a *moral* and the first and greatest of the moral Virtues, tho' never once call'd so. So likewise Faith accomplishes its End of good Works, tho' not call'd a moral Virtue, is nevertheless, in the Nature of Things, the Head of all the moral Virtues in the Religion of pleasing God. Therefore that Foundation must be false, That the Christian Revelation is only a Means of Information, without any Obligation of Believing*.

Thus Faith is the Beginning of cleaving unto † God, and one of the *weightier Things of the moral Law* ‖, which must certainly be meant of Faith in God, and not towards Man, because the parallel Place varies it *the Love of God* ‡. Besides, all Laws, Human and Divine, when they oblige to the End, oblige, at the same Time, to the properest Means, in the Subject's Power, for answering the End, and punish for the Neglect. And when the Legislator, at any time, *enacts* and *requires* any particular, more explicit and effectual Means for advancing and securing the Law of the End, the Subject is par-

* The Foundation of that Book, *Christianity not Myste-
rious.* † Eccl. xxv. 12. ‖ Matth. xxiii. 23.
‡ Luke xi. 42.

ticularly

ticularly and more especially oblig'd to a Com-pliance; because, in that Case, they become the only *legal* and *acceptable* Means for fulfilling the End. And when the Law of the Means does so plainly appear to the Subject, to be not only in Affirmance of the Law of the End, but entirely framed for, declaratively promotive of, and actually serviceable to the End; *Do we then, argues the Apostle, make void the [moral] Law thro' Faith? God forbid; yea, we establish that Law.* Whoever is honest and sincere in professing Obedience to this Law, will be as sincere and obedient in embracing the other, and for the sake of the Religion of one, love the Religion of the other; if he conscientiously holds to the one, he cannot in his Conscience despise the other.

BUT, to be sure, if he is false to the End, he will use all manner of Artifice to evade the Means. Or should he happen to doubt of the Law of the Means, and at the same Time affect to give out among his Neighbours, how true is he to the End! when he himself, and all his Neighbours see that Law has no other View, but the fulfilling the End, and must certainly for that Reason proceed from the same Fountain of Authority, the other took its Rise from: He must soon either lay aside his Doubts; or, if he should continue, and be troublesome with them, his Neighbour will solve them for him, and tell him a Truth he can't deny, that the true Reason of it is, because he disaffects and dislikes the End, at the Bottom of his Heart.

THIS

THIS accounts for that Scripture, why *all Men have not Faith* *, i. e. have not an Inclination of Will or *orderly Disposition* of Heart to such wise and worthy Things, as *ordains* them, sets them in *order* to eternal Life: The Reason follows, because they are *unreasonable and wicked Men*, ἀνομοί, absurd Persons, Reason-Haters, Truthless Creatures, upon whose Will the *Topicks* of common Reason and Persuasion have lost their Influence; from whom, as from incurable Adversaries to God, and their own Souls, it is therefore *pray'd to be deliver'd*. The Author of *Characteristicks* confesses, "that the highest Good" and *Happiness* must depend upon *right Opinion* †." And must not that right Opinion necessarily extend to the *right Means* of attaining that highest Good and Happiness?

To illustrate these Matters; the Laws, since the *Reformation*, which established the *Protestant Religion* and the *English Liberties*, rather supposed, than served the Subjects with effectual Means for that End; but they did the best they could with those imperfect Means; till the happy *Revolution* came, which soon after settled (Thanks be to God the Protector of the Reformation for his good Providence, for the Majority of *one* Vote in one of the Houses!) the particular, explicit, effectual Means ever after for it, in the *present happy Settlement*. I ask then, though it was a Duty before for Men to do the best they could, are not all Subjects *now*, particularly, oblig'd to espouse, and adhere to this blessed, *explicit Law* of the Means, and that inviolably, and without

* 2 *Thes.* iii. 2.† *Charact.* Vol. III. pag. 169.

any doubting? So, when the *Saviour* of the *World* came to deliver Men from the Dominion and Slavery of the *Devil*, tied and bound as they were to him in the Chain of their Sins, and blinded moreover by him with horrid Delusions; were all the Natives of these Dominions as sensible of the Value of Liberty in one Case, as in the other (not to say how much one excels the other) or, of the Enjoyment of a much better Life from one Deliverance than the other, it could not fail, but that every Soul would be, and appear to be as well affected to *Jesus Christ*, as to the present Government, and think it a *Politeness* of Honour and good Sense of a *Briton* to be firmly attached to, and constantly well behaved towards him, paramount to all other Honour, to all other little Politeness: For this would retrieve the true gallant Politeness, consisting in general Humanity, Justice, Veracity, Love of Virtue, and public Spirit, all which endear and secure Society; and by degrees would polish off the *modern*, mean Politeness, which appears out of Season in a Protestant, and to the Dishonour of a Christian Nation, in *Falseness*, *Selfishness*, *licentious Opinions*, *Luxury* of several Sorts, a *Spirit of Infidelity*, and a *Multitude of Wants*; and to increase them the more, a *servile Imitation* of the worst failings of the *French*. One is a Civil Virtue for the Civil Life of a *British* Subject, the other is a moral Divine Virtue for a moral and divine Life, begun in inward Peace with God here, and consummated in eternal Blessedness hereafter.

AND if no Man can come to the Father but through him, the only appointed Mediator and Peace-maker, how can the *Rejecters* of him pretend to go to the Father, or expect any Peace with

CHAP. XVIII. with him in this Life, or the next? The Father however is willing to have those Incogitant Persons *saved*, but then he *wills* the Means also; and that is, by their *coming to the Knowledge of the Truth* of that only Means, and making proper use of it. It would well become the *Deist* therefore to consider, whether he will not become justly suspected of being a good Subject as well to one Government, as the other. For does he imagine, that the *present Administration* of these Realms does not understand its Interest better, than not to interpose in time, for preventing such Sentiments from enlarging into a *Fashion*, (the Law of which has more sway over the sociable Nature of most Men than the Laws of God, or the Magistrate) and for protecting the other Kingdom that is not of this World, as it is so exceeding serviceable to their own Kingdom, so long as it keeps clear from the Corruptions of *Irreligion* and *Popery*: but their Irreligion against *Christ*, wherewith they go on to infect such vast Multitudes, directly leads and paves the Way to the other, as I before amicably shew'd*; and that we all know is the Ruin of all.

I CAN'T imagine why they don't rather chuse to submit to the *Principal*, in time, rather than be ensnar'd, having the Snare in Sight, into a Submission to his *pretended Vicar*. Is not reasonable Virtue to both Governments better than Death-bed Repentance? The Design of King *Charles II's* Reign, according to a good Historian, "seem'd to be to make us first *Atheists*, in order to make us *Papists*." But do they think in their little Conscience that those evil Times are coming about again?

* Page 212, &c. of this Vol.

IF after this nothing can be added to shew the Wickedness of refusing Obedience to the Law of the Means, I shall have Occasion afterwards to demonstrate the Folly of it to those who are so wise in their own Conceit. Mean time, it may be proper to observe *how* those things come about. And this will open the several Steps of Folly, in Mens Treatment of this Law of the Means, *Faith in the Mediator*, in the Particulars before explain'd.

Now, it being agreed on all Sides, that this Faith carries with it a declar'd moral Obligation, and most divine Direction to *Purity and Holiness of Manners*, therefore call'd *holy Faith*; where there is, and for so long as there is an Irregularity, or Immorality in the Will as to that sort of Obedience to this Faith, in either not embracing it at all; or not as what it really is; or not putting it to its design'd Use; naturally produces a corresponding Conduct in the Understanding, to keep up some sort of outward Shew of Consistency, or some Kind of Sense of inward Peace and Quiet in the Agent, such as it is. Therefore a resolv'd Adherence in the one so commonly brings forth a Refusal of the other; a Corruption, or Latitude in one, a Corruption or Latitude in the other; a Neglect of the one, an Inconsideration of the other. Hence it comes to pass, in the Nature of Things, that some are *Rejecters*, others *Corrupters* by Principle; some *Doubters*, others careless *Neglecters* of it.

1. THE REJECTERS of this Faith are desired to examine their own Breasts, whether some

CHAP. XVIII. with him in this Life, or the next? The Father however is willing to have those Incogitant Persons *saved*, but then he *wills* the Means also; and that is, by their *coming to the Knowledge of the Truth* of that only Means, and making proper use of it. It would well become the *Deist* therefore to consider, whether he will not become justly suspected of being a good Subject as well to one Government, as the other. For does he imagine, that the *present Administration* of these Realms does not understand its Interest better, than not to interpose in time, for preventing such Sentiments from enlarging into a *Fashion*, (the Law of which has more sway over the sociable Nature of most Men than the Laws of God, or the Magistrate) and for protecting the other Kingdom that is not of this World, as it is so exceeding serviceable to their own Kingdom, so long as it keeps clear from the Corruptions of *Irreligion and Popery*; but their Irreligion against *Christ*, wherewith they go on to infect such vast Multitudes, directly leads and paves the Way to the other, as I before amicably shew'd*; and that we all know is the Ruin of all.

I CAN'T imagine why they don't rather chuse to submit to the *Principal*, in time, rather than be ensnar'd, having the Snare in Sight, into a Submission to his *pretended Vicar*. Is not seasonable Virtue to both Governments better than Death-bed Repentance? The Design of King Charles II's Reign, according to a good Historian, "seem'd to be to make us first *Atheists*, in order to make us *Papists*." But do they think in their little Conscience that those evil Times are coming about again?

* Page 212, &c. of this Vol.

IF

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I. THE REJECTERS of this Faith are desired to examine their own Breasts, whether some

CHAP. XVIII. some habitual Wickedness in Flesh, or Spirit, has not seiz'd upon their Wills, and warp't its Choice? as it is a great Pravity of Mind to act contrary to a known Duty, still resolving so to do, and they receiving the Knowledge of this same Faith as a Judgment impending over their Actions, breaking the Peace and Tranquillity within; whether in order to restore that Peace, and patch it up as well as they can, they do not really make a *Dupe* of their Understandings, purposely setting it to work to reverse that Judgment, by all the Witticisms, Lustre of Words, artificial Exceptions it is Master of; and the Spirit of Dispute (from which nothing is exempt) soon helps them to it, when it turns itself against the plainest Works, or Words of God, notwithstanding there is a peculiar kind of Self-Evidence in both of them; especially, if they can form any more agreeable Project from a Notion of God's Goodness with regard to the Pardon of Sin, which shall, at the same Time, be more easy and indulgent to Sin? This is a serious Truth, and it imports them to lay their Hand upon their Heart; because it can be proved upon them by Variety of Instances; and it is pity they should so greatly contribute and submit to the worst of deceit, Self-deceit, and yet be the last in the Kingdom that don't find it out.

If they would please to study a little better the *Mystery of Iniquity*, how it is allow'd of, and cherish'd in their own Bosom; how it makes them such a Mystery, hid indeed to themselves, but sufficiently reveal'd to others; they would presently understand all the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. They would feel the first to be their Disease, and find the Mystery of Godliness

Godliness and of Faith for a pure Conscience to CHAP. XVIII. be their only Remedy; and the only safe Clew for leading Human Nature out of the Labyrinth They, and it are bewilder'd in. *That Secret of the Lord is with the Righteous* only, such as are righteously disposed to the Religion of the End, to such only does he shew his Covenant in the Mediator: That will shine out and comfort their Hearts as *the only sure and profitable Philosophy* *. It being the Design of the Gospel, in order to heal them freely, and friendly, to discover them to Themselves, and redeem them from Themselves, by redeeming them from all Iniquity of Flesh and Spirit; which tyrannizes over the Will and Affections, cheats and perverts the Understanding in its perceiving, judging, and inferring the things that make for its Peace, and belong to the true End and Interest of Man; at the same time, its Discernment and Acuteness in Civil Affairs is as bright as ever.

BUT whenever the Proffer of that salutary Design is seen and disliked, and the Service of Sin is still resolv'd upon, then the Will sends out its Commands to the Affections to *bate the Light*, that makes such disagreeable Discoveries; and at the same time Orders are issued out to the Understanding to use all its Arts in raising Objections, and crying it down as a Fiction, and give it all the foul Play of Ridicule; Arbitrariness in the Author of it; Nonsense, Contradiction in its Mysteries; Satire upon the Priests; Needlessness of the whole, and every Misrepresentation of every Part, that Partiality, Preju-

* Ταύτην μόνον εὐεισκαὶ φιλοσοφίαν ἀσφαλῆ τε καὶ σύμφορον.
Just. M. Dial. cum Tryph.

dice, and inveterate Enmity can suggest. And all this for what? For no other Cause in the World, but *because their Deeds are Evil*; the *hidden things of Darkness* loath Day and Discovery, nor can they endure to be molested in their secret Fastness. They hate the Sight of their own evil Deeds, therefore hate the Light which brings that Sight; the whole Course of their Life reclaims against such reforming Light, they can't endure to come near it, or hear its Persuasions with any Patience, tho' it is guilty of no other Wrong towards them, but persuading them with all Tendernefs and Respect, to forsake those evil Deeds that will be their Ruin.

PRESENT Conscience being the present Opinion a Man has of his own Actions *, it comes to pass that Faith and Works mutually match, and justify each other in their Choice of one another. If there is a wrong Choice of Works, there will be a wrong, yet suitable Choice of Faith; and if the Will suffers not the Deeds to square with the Faith, the holy Faith must either buckle to the Deeds, or be banish'd quite away from the Observation of those Misdeeds. As the Sight of the Eye depends upon the right Disposition of the Organ, so the Judgment of the Man depends upon the inward State, Condition, and Disposition of his own Mind; which sees, argues, and judges of Objects, Things, and Persons, just as it is *disposed* and stands *affected*.

* Tho' Conscience is an internal Judge of Man's Actions, yet, like all other Judges, it ought to judge and determine according to Rule and Law prescribed to it, and not pretend to be a Rule and Law to itself: Still the Opinion and present Understanding of the prescribed Law governs the Man; but whilst it governs, is obliged to *learn* and *study* its Duty, as a Judge.

So the Badness of the Deeds having got the Mastery over the Will, the reasoning Faculties are set to work to get Mastery over the Faith; a prompt willing Undertaking to get rid of a Belief which they can't think of without Pain! The Pain of parting from their Lusts, or the Grief of not being able to enjoy them under that Belief. And having play'd the Fool in being a Slave to their Sins, must needs be so wise to give the World a Reason to justify themselves in Print; to make a Party, and gather the Votes of such as are as bad, or worse inclin'd than themselves.—They animate one another.—Thus practical Infidelity becomes so fruitful a Source of speculative controversial Infidelity; which is making bad worse, and doubling the Folly, by standing to it, and rendring themselves incurable, and unperfuadable; unless, perchance, some Remains of Honour and Ingenuity are left to read and weigh the Arguments on both Sides; there being Shelter in *Deism for Sin*, and several flattering Covers for Iniquity, but none at all in real honest Christianity: They who would lessen the Civil War in their own Breasts, whilst they are determin'd to have Pleasure in sensual Irregularities, are therefore easily proselyted to have no Pleasure in the Truth as it is in *Jesus Christ*.

BUT the Mischief grows desperate by persevering long to have no Pleasure in that Truth for the Amendment of Life; for the God of that Truth, not caring to be mock'd for his Kindness, turns the Mock upon them, and gives them up to *believe a Lie*, that they may be damned to gnashing of Teeth, 2 *Thes.* ii. 10,

CHAP. &c. *For this Cause*, (because they received not the Love of the Truth *that they might be saved*) *God sends strong Delusions that they should believe a Lye, that they all may be damn'd who believe not the Truth, but have Pleasure in Unrighteousness, εν τῇ ἀδυνία, i. e. in Falshood* (the Opposite of it) for being unjust and false to the most instructive saving Truth. Do they pretend to be an Exception to that common Human Falacy, *facile credimus quod volumus?* Do they deserve to have Eyes, or the Use of Eyes, who hate the Light of the Sun? This judicial Blindness as to moral and spiritual Truth, is evident both from the Nature of Things, and Matter of Fact. For the Will controuling all, and that being bent upon Works of Darknes, the Understanding is made a Vassal and a Pimp to its iniquitous Purposes, and so by long Slavery loses its Distinctions and Direction in moral, or divine Things; puts *Darkness for Light, and Light for Darknes*; its natural Power of judging what is fit to be believed is inverted, and the Will takes its Place, and believes what it pleases; which accounts for another Passage, *By bearing ye shall bear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive.* The evil Heart of Unbelief with regard to enlightning directive Truth, is naturally addicted to believing the reverse, which is the Lye, or Darknes; and so being persuaded of the Lye, what is utterly false in Nature, and ruinous withal in its Consequences, it shall become a *moral*, but a stupid senseless Truth to them; and so by long continued Prevarication, and Unfaithfulness to the Light of Truth, Darknes and Light shall be both alike to them. When the Will leads the Understanding, it is a Wickedness punish'd with Blindness; when the Understanding

Understanding directs and advises the Will according to the best of its Knowledge, attainable in its present Circumstances and Opportunities, and happens to mistake, the Mistake is innocent. So far, in the Nature of Pravity incident to human Faculties, is it from being true, "That Men can no otherwise believe than as things appear to them," as before cited.

FOR Christianity would appear quite another thing to its Opposers, if they would lay aside Prejudice, Partiality, and interfering Interest arising from Indulgence of vicious Habits; those Hindrances being wilful and of their own chusing, they are guilty of chusing not to let it appear as what it is; and if they say they see it as it really is, and not receive it, their Sin remaineth. And that Saying will be verify'd, if the Gospel, after it is so reveal'd, is hid, *it is hid only to those that are lost*, to all Reception of it: And also that other, *None of the WICKED shall understand, but the Wise shall understand* *; their Mind grows reprobate, or undiscerning, as in the Original. † *Evil Men and Seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.* ‡

AND this is confirm'd by History, and Matter of Fact. Our Saviour told the *Jews*, *ye will not come to me that ye might have Life* ||: Their Unbelief lay in their *Will*, and proceeded from it, they were so unreasonably then, and to this Day, lost in Perverseness and Obstinacy, no otherwise accountable, but as above-mention'd, that nothing that then appear'd

* Dan. xii. 10.
|| John v. 40.

† Rom. i. 24.

‡ Tim. iii. 13.

CHAP. XVIII. before their Understanding could convince it; no, not the Sight of Miracles. They are so notorious an Instance, it need not be insisted upon; nor yet our Lord's Declaration, that the Miracle of one rising from the Dead would be ineffectual to convince a resolv'd Infidel, set against the Faith of Revelation. This has been often urged, with great Advantage. But if they won't believe that, they will, 'tis hop'd, give Credence to a Dictate of Reason and common Experience from one of their own *Moralists* and Apostles, that irregular Pleasure is a Cause of Infidelity, and *corruptive of Principles* of Reason. * However they can't refuse Belief to their own *Oracle*, the noble Author of *Character*. when he says, "*There is a certain perverse Humanity in us [Deists] which inwardly resists the Divine Commission, tho' ever so plainly reveal'd*" †; it respects a particular Instance, but is no less true, from him, with regard to the whole Revelation.

HERE is the Secret of *Deism* blabb'd out by one of the subtlest Opposers of Revelation that ever wrote. It is not the want of sufficient Evidence to make it plain and incontestable, nor of its appearing plainly so to the Understanding of *Deists*; but a certain *perverse Humanity* within them that makes them resist; and they *pervert* that Humanity within them, if not always, and in all Persons among them, thro' a libertine criminal Sensuality; yet by an Iniquity of *Spirit*, a bloated Filthiness, and fastidious Swelling that is worse; as being more obstinate and perverse

* *ἡ διαρρηξις τῶν ἀρετῶν*. Aristot. pag. 358.

† Vol. I.

in its very Nature, and harder to be recover'd CHAP. XVIII. to submit to any Conviction.

BUT their Iniquity of *Spirit* is no less contrary to the Law of Nature, and the old Philosophy, teaching Men their own Unworthiness, and Ignorance, than is the former. Both are wide Deviations from the Religion of the End, and equal Falacy as to any pretence to Virtue; if a Man love Righteousness, her Labours are Virtues, for she teacheth Temperance and Prudence, Justice and Fortitude, Wisd. viii. 7. And Iniquity of Spirit strengthens itself in false Notions of the Nature of God as Governor of the World, and also in over-conceited Opinion of the Capacity of Human Reason, Self-sufficiency and Independance upon God, (tho' an independent Creature is the greatest Absurdity in Nature) indulg'd Arrogances of Spirit will as soon turn a Man into a *Devil*, as Gratifications of Appetite will into a Brute; and render the Man more mischievous upon Earth than any Brute. Spiritual Libertines have as much to answer for, as Sensual; but seem to have the most deadly Disease upon them: I mean, a *moral Apoplexy*, occasioned by the great Redundance of bloating Sufficiency. And as this Sufficiency and Fulness of SELF, sets itself in Opposition to humble Self-Knowledge and Self-Government, and renounces Dependance upon God for Knowledge or Conduct; it must be most destructive to Man, and no less hateful to God: It must be the most pernicious and fatal of all Schemes both to the Honour of God, and Good of Men.

IT is not one of your intermitting Vices, such as Wrath, Drunkenness, Lust, Gluttony, which

CHAP. XVIII. which have some lucid Intervals, and leave the Sinner some Seasons to recollect and recover himself to better Practice; but this Disease is of the *unintermitting* Kind, a *continued* high Fever of Soul, *always* thinking more highly of *Self*, than ought to be thought, less respectfully to God's Honour, and submissively to his Ways with Mankind; deflowers God of his Glory, and lays waste the Salvation of Self, and Good of Mankind. Perverse *Obstinacy*, *Inconsideration*, *Haste*, *Anticipation*, *Partiality*, *Presumption*, particular *Envy*, groundless *Aversion* and *Prejudice*, unreasonable *Bigotry* or *Fondness*, have as malign perverting Influence upon the Understanding as the more immediate Lusts of the Flesh *. *Isaiah* xxix. 9. represents the *Jews* as *drunken*, but not with *Wine*; they stagger'd, but not with strong drink; and the Apostle lays in the Caution of being *sober-minded*, which supposes that there is spiritual Drunkenness and filthy Irregularities in the Mind, whereof the Body has no share.

BUT nothing more than the Pride of *Genius*, which delights to parade in a Superiority of Understanding, by censuring, and endeavouring to pull down what the united Wisdom of the Publick has approved of, and concurs in submitting to, as most reasonable and beneficial to the Community. This is the judicious Observation of the Bishop of *London*; his Words are,

* " *Pride* and *Revenge* are Immoralities within; which bend the Mind as strongly as any other *Vices* in the World. *Personal Prejudice* will often put a Bias upon it, as powerful as *Debauchery*; and *Pique*, and *Resentment*, will hinder Eye-sight itself; and turn the plainest *Evidences* into Doubts, and often into Falshoods, with the Man that is actuated by them." Present Bp. of *Winchester's* Tracts, pag. 463.

" Others

CHAP. XVIII. " Others are led by *Pride* and *Self-conceit*, to raise Doubts and Disputes concerning any Opinions and Doctrines which are generally receiv'd and establish'd, how evident soever it may be, that the Doctrines they oppose are agreeable to all the Principles of Virtue in general, and of Christianity in particular. Such Men disdain to think in the *common* Way, and valuing themselves upon a more than ordinary Share of Knowledge and Penetration, do always affect Novelty and Singularity in Opinion. Which *opposing* Humour was well express'd by one of our modern Advocates for Infidelity, in what he is reported to have said of one of his Fellow-labourers to this effect, " *That if his own Opinions were establish'd to-day, he would oppose them to-morrow.*" *Past. I. p. 7, 8.* So sweet and intoxicating withal is the pre-eminence of *leading* a Party, tho' in the wrong, and to an ill end, and thro' labyrinths of Error!

THIS dissatisfied Spirit of *opposing* the Divine *Establishment* in Heaven, among the several Orders of Beings, seems to have been the Sin of the *Angels* that *fell*, and found no Repentance; but it is the Prayer of Christians, that these Men may repent, in time. Mean time, their opposing Spirit is punish'd with the notorious Guilt of Self-contradiction and Inconsistency; and they have been able to produce no other Proof of the Self-sufficiency of their Reason, than the *Defect* of Reason, and *minute* Philosophy in Abundance, with a notorious Design of subverting the Religion of Nature they pretend to favour, and levelling every thing to *Atheism*.

Now, was there any thing in Christianity really opposite to Natural Religion, or injurious

CHAP. rious to Morality, the Zeal of the *Deists*, Sub-
 XVIII. jects of *Great-Britain*, would be commendable
 in opposing the Religion of their Country. But
 if the whole is calculated purely in subservi-
 ency, and for the Promotion of that End; if
 the Religion of the Means has that old Reli-
 gion of the End for the Object of its Improve-
 ment, to carry it on to its utmost Perfection,
 by all the Means, Aids, Motives, and Helps
 that were wanting: If it lays no Restraint upon
 the Appetites, and Passions, but what the Law
 of Reason laid before, and nothing is condemn'd
 by that, but what this joins in the condemna-
 tion of: If there is no Pain in its Repentance and
 Self-denial, but what is absolutely necessary, and
 must be undergone for cure of that Disease Men
 feel within themselves; and that extraordinary
 Self-denial, and Loss in times of *Persecution*,
 carries its *peculiar* Recompence with it; *an*
hundred-fold in this Life present, *i. e.* Joy and
 Satisfaction of Mind in suffering in so good and
 so recompensing a Cause, an hundred times
 better than all the Possessions of the World;
 and in the World to come Life everlasting in
 a distinguish'd Sphere of Felicity: If in its ge-
 nuine Observance, it both constitutes, and pro-
 longs the Happiness of every Individual, and
 of every Community; how sadly, how self-
 convictedly do they act in Contradiction to
 themselves as rational Creatures, pretending
 Friendship to the End, and yet justifying Enmi-
 ty and fierce Opposition to the best Means for
 carrying it on; tho' it is not only a Maxim of
 the Law of *England*, but of common practical
 Reason all the World over, *Qui adimit medium,*
dirimit Finem: tho' not one of them are able to
 deny; and the Author of *Christianity as old,*
 &c.

&c. in particular, confessesit, * a MEANS to that CHAP.
 End? With what shameful Contradiction do XVIII.
 they behave to the Duty of Subjects, in labour-
 ing to subvert the Religion of their Country,
 (wherein the Happiness of us all is involved) and
 so bring in Confusion and Misery?

Now if the Thoughts of so many Absurdities,
 big with Mischief, are irrational, and disloyal,
 what is the wretched Fact, what Name is there
 for the zealous bigotted Endeavour, but consum-
 mate Wickedness? deserving, at least, Abhor-
 rence of every wise Man, and faithful Subject,
 from coming into their Measures, at any rate,
 or under any colour of giving any Countenance
 to a Conspiracy against yours, and mine, and
 every body's general Happiness now, and here-
 after? And if this Religion of the Means has
 been shewn to be a perfectly reasonable Service
 in all its Branches, and agreeable in all its Sym-
 metries to the Nature of Things, as known by
 Reason, and discover'd by Revelation; what
 wretched Philosophers, as well as bad Citizens,
 are these Men? What poor Creatures are they
 in moral Sense, and honest good Reason, dire-
 ctive to the Honour of God, and Good of Men.

FOR, if the Religion of the End is universally
 necessary to the Good of Men, by the Voice of
 Nature; is it not for the Honour of God, is it
 not his peculiar Favour, to publish the Knowledge
 of the Means, as to his Wisdom seemeth best?
 If that Religion of the Means is actually made
 publick, or said to be so, that obliges to a due
 Enquiry, and that necessitates an effectual Com-

* p. 390, and several other Places,

pliance.

CHAP. XVIII. *pliance.* If the Means are of *his* appointing, who can change them; or dare to substitute others in their Room? And if the Religion of the End cannot be perform'd, nor will be accepted in a Christian Nation, without the other; for any to apostatize from such Means is, in other Words, to apostatize from the End, subvert Natural Religion, and so destroy what they build, or pretend to build, with their own Hands. As I have abundantly shewn with respect to the ablest and acutest of these Adversaries, in his *Inquiry concerning Virtue.*

THESE Men indeed talk of the Law of Nature, Benevolence, Love of God and Virtue, &c. but it is nothing, as I have shewn, but *Talk* and *Pretext*, to pull down Christianity, and, with that, root up Natural Religion. For what signifies pretending to the End whilst they wilfully divest themselves of the Means? No *Day*, no *Place*, no *Person* for *publick Worship*: Therefore it can be no Religion of the End, to them, since they never meet together, in a religious Way, to carry it on; God is only a private Notion, not a *publick* God to them. And if they hold Communion with *Christians*, they hold it in dishonourable Hypocrisy.

BUT if they will turn to the End with an upright Heart, which God, long-suffering in Mercy, grant they may, they will taste the divine Truth and admire the Reasoning of our blessed Lord: *If any Man will do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine, whether it be of God.*
* If ye will perform the Religion of the End, and

* 1 *Job.* vii. 17.

receive

CHAP. XVIII. receive the Means, ye may be added to the *Church*, but not otherwise; for the Church of Christ is nothing else but the true Means to that End; (and in Fact of History, as many as did believe Remission of Sins, in the Name of *Jesus*, and receive him as the Means of acceptable Repentance and Prayer, were actually added unto the Church under the Character of *τοὺς σωζομένους* *the Saved*, or might be saved, in virtue of their own wise Choice and Preference; rather than any modern Notion of a Divine Decree of the *Many*, i. e. Number of those destined to it.) The *Doctrine* was purposely ordain'd and came from God, to enable Men to perform his Will the better, to give them Repentance towards God, gain them Pardon for their Sins, Access and Acceptance to their Prayers, and Peace and Joy to their sincere Endeavours of Duty; the Joy of serving God with a quiet mind; which all the *Learning* in the World could never have discovered (as is plainly supposed in the Words, being an Answer to that Question, *How knoweth this Man Letters, having never learned?*) if that Doctrine and Teaching had not descended from the Father of Lights, the God of all Mercy and Comfort. And where he wills the End to be performed more perfectly, he reveals and wills the Means.

IF therefore any Man wills the End in the Honesty of his Heart, he of course wills the Means with the same Honesty; and whenever he has that Will to *both*, his Knowledge of the Doctrine of the Means is in a manner prevented; upon the first Enquiry he is prepar'd to receive, he is *ordain'd* or *set in order* to eternal Life; neither is his Heart slow of believing, Faith flows

CHAP. flows in with ease, without Hesitation, and with
XVIII. great Joy. He sees the Doctrine of the MEDIATOR to be perfectly harmonious to the Nature of God, and Man; but, what is greater in it, to be the great Prop and Consolation of the drooping guilty Life of Man; he receives his Sacraments as his Helps and Comforts; he glories in the afforded Aids, and Instruments: his Uprightness and Sincerity triumph in the Certainty of the Resurrection, looking for the Day of Judgment; and to the Day of his Distribution of Rewards and Punishments, as the great Principle of Conscience, the chief Interest, the supreme Happiness he has in View; and both observes and remits his Duty with respect to all the Prohibitions, and the several Commandments, to be crown'd at that Day. Being truly attach'd to the Morality of the End he has a feeling Sense within him, which none but such can have, beyond the Acuteness of the most learned Evil-doer, in seeing the moral Use and Divine Evidence of the Means to be incontestably good, and true, because the Means themselves are so, to his own Knowledge; he instantly despises the little affected Exceptions of the other, and knows where the Objection sticks, let them say what they will: he brings a Mind to the Gospel full of the Design of the Gospel, and therefore it clearly opens itself to such a Mind, and delights it; he hears the Overtures, knows the Voice, comes to it, and finds Pasture; whilst the other makes a thousand Excuses, all resolvable into one, "none so deaf as those who won't hear."

He *that is of God*, and holds not that natural Truth in Unrighteousness, *beareth God's Words*;

Words; ye therefore bear them not, because ye are not of God; if ye believe in him to any purpose, ye will believe also in me; but he that has, and cherishes the Spirit of Unrighteousness, will, for so long, cherish the Spirit of *Anti-Christ*, or Resistance to the Gospel, in himself; and that Man, throughout all Ages of it, will ever want Integrity towards its Truths, who is defective in his Integrity towards its purifying Design. It will never carry Evidence with it, whether internal or external, sufficient to convince and proselyte such a Person; tho' that Evidence was double to what it is, was that possible. But, if he is sincere and acts the Part of the Gentleman upon Honour, in his Declaration for fulfilling the Law of Nature, he will be altogether Christian, and look upon *Christ* as the greatest Friend to that most honest pacifick Project, that ever yet visited this World: as being, in every thing of his prescribing, the sole perfect, the only effectual Means for bringing it to any Effect; and from listening to him, become an Instance of the Truth of his divine incontestable Assertion, *He that is of God, beareth God's Words*. For this is, doubtless, the most usual Way of his opening the Heart of those who hear his Gospel; and there is both Virtue and Piety in assenting to such a perspicuous Proposition, and embracing such evident Means; because the Evidence and Perspicuity are ratified in the Virtue and Piety of the End they promote. Such Means therefore are certainly to be earnestly and worthily contended for, if it was only for the sake of such a worthy End.

If any Man therefore is averse to the doing the Will of God, too much to be avow'd openly;

CHAP. XVIII. ly; or if indifferent to it, in Principle, he has the Disposition of an *Author* within him, to declare upon *Principle* (as he of *Christianity* as old, &c. every where does) that the Means are not obligatory, but *arbitrary*, *indifferent*, *needless* Things; which is filing a Declaration before God, and all the World, against himself, and all his Disciples, what little respect they bear to the End; too shameful for them to own! but, at the same time, too evident to be denied! If therefore they know themselves to be such notorious Hypocrites as to the End, it is no wonder they are seen to be Unbelievers, or which is the same Thing, in other Words, Hypocrites in their Objections to the Means; and the Parity of divine Justice in allotting one and the same *Portion* to *Unbelievers* and to *Hypocrites*, * is admirably exact, as well as very terrible.

THEY have been often put in Mind of the Danger, and Justice of the Damnation hanging over their Heads; from that I desist, having sufficiently shewn the *Immorality* of their Unbelief; that answers my Purpose in speaking to the Rejecters of this Faith.

II. There are CORRUPTERS of the Faith. For this being a new explicit Principle for controuling all irregular Practice, when the Practice will not be controul'd by it, it naturally becomes disaffected to the other, either in whole, or in part. If it cannot for Shame wholly throw it off, it will, out of Favour to the indulg'd Irregularity, try Ways and Means to corrupt, or new model it, so, as there shall be, at least to

* Luke, xii. 46. Matt. xxiv. 51.

their

CHAP. XVIII. their Imagination, a better Understanding between one and t'other. Either Ignorance of Scripture, filthy Lucre, Lust of forbidden Pleasure, of Party Honour, and secular Ambition of a Sect, or some sinister View, as it predominates, takes the Chair; and dictates to the Principle, "You cannot be my Guide unless you bend and dispense so and so, it must be done; I shall not disown you, if you do not me: I perceive how it may be done." Thus Corruption begins in Principle, and spreads by Argument, and Men side with it, as they find the evil Disposition within towards Works of the Flesh terminating in this Life, like to be favour'd by it. For the Head of all *Heresy* is *Carnality*, or *Earthiness*. *Sincerum est nisi vas, quodcumque infundis accipit*. What tho' it occasions some Self-condemnation within, no Mortal can detect that; if the Principle is stuck to in Appearance, the *Name* of Faith remains, that saves Appearances, and that is enough.

AND that has ever been done, by introducing *new unscriptural* Terms into the Faith once deliver'd to the Saints; for the defeating of which, Councils have been able hitherto to find out no better Method, at least they have tried no other, than piously to superadd to the Faith other *antagonist* Terms, not so much because they are to be met with in Scripture, as because they import a Meaning effectually contrary, and preservative against those Expressions and Sentiments, which first began the Innovation.

AND so it will ever be, that corrupt Manners, in part resolv'd upon in some Instance or other, will ever be resolv'd upon a *corrupt Creed* to support

port them. For Instance, the more the *Greatness* of the Person, whom God sent into the World to take away Sin and give it Life, is lessen'd and degraded; the more that, by a direct Tendency, lessens our Notion of God's *Hatred* of Sin; our Perception of his *Love* of the World; and our *Confidence* of Access, and Acceptance; of *Remission* of Sins, and *eternal Life*; and consequently, the corresponding Practice depending upon the Influence of those Truths, will all be proportionably lessen'd and abated, *i. e.* our *Aversion* and *Avoidance* of Sin, our *Love* and *Gratitude* to God; our *Repentance* will be more slow and indifferent, and our *Devotion* colder and less frequent. So that whoever espouses these *Diminutions* of Virtue as his Choice, is violently inclined, and too often carried up and attach'd in Creed by way of Justification, to the *lessening*, *degrading* Notions of the *Son of God*. Tho' it is plain they ought not to use such Liberty, seeing in reality the End of such Liberty, however cloak'd over with Words, is a *Cloak of Maliciousness*; there is Malice at the Bottom against the full Extent of the Commandments regarding the Religion of the Means for perfecting the Religion of the End, at the same time they continue to compliment and flatter the Commands regarding the last.

My present Subject confines me to consider such only, as has a near Affinity to what I have been treating of. Such is the Extreme of some, who by Principle receive the Faith, and yet in Principle degrade it of its proper Rank, and Subordination; and depress it even below the Use and Service of a *Means*, making little or nothing of it; which is a very heinous and most dan-

dangerous Departure from the Truth, denying CHAP.
and diminishing it from what it really is in its XVIII
Station.

Obedi, & credidisti, is a famous Socinian Maxim; and again Socinus disparages it at a very low Rate. "Faith as it applies Assent of the Understanding to the Truths of the Gospel, is not of necessary Obligation, but a kind of Ornament at best, rather than Matter of real Use; admit it brings some small Advantage with it, yet the Want or Absence will be attended with no great Inconvenience; you may say of it, as one did of the Art of Poetry, *Si adest laudo, si abest non multum vitupero*; what is said of Meats may be said of that, *1 Cor. viii. 8.* it commendeth not to God, neither if we believe are we the better, neither if we believe not are we the worse, *modo vitæ sanctimoniz salva sit.*" *

* *Edward's Preservative*, Part III. p. 35. See more of these Sentiments, in *Reland's Critical Reflections on Mahometanism and Socianism*, p. 236. And it is pretty observable what the same Author, p. 204, remarks of the Apostate Emperor Julian, that he embraced the Sentiments of *Aetius* (whilst he was a Christian) which consisted in Opinions very little differing from *Photianism*, *i. e.* *Socinianism*. So near is the Affinity, and so easy the Transition or Apostasy from *Socianism* to *Deism*. The *Rational Catechism*, and most of their Writings I have met with, drop all use of Christ as a Mediator, &c. and the very mention of a *New Covenant*, which is the most certain original Foundation of Christianity. Tho' some of their Books retain the mention of Christ as Mediator of Intercession in Heaven, yet was it possible for God, who never does an improper Thing, to appoint a mere Man in their Sense, to be Mediator there, he could be no more in the Nature of Things, than an incompetent, partial, half Mediator, as I have before shewn in the first Vol. and without Omniscience and Omnipresence to the Hearts of all Men, could not be capable of discharging the Office of Mediator *ex parte*.

BUT this is arguing upon a most absurd, preposterous Supposition, putting the Effect before the Cause, and making it independent of it; gathering Fruit without a Tree; and recommending Virtue without any Principle of Virtue. For tho' it is never so true, that the Excellency of Faith, and the Value of all reveal'd Knowledge is to be estimated from its Design and Tendency to better Mens Repentance, Prayers, and Practices; and the Measure of Errors to be regarded from its Tendency to corrupt and spoil any of these (*Immorality*, transgressing the Religion of the End, being certainly the greatest *Herefy*, and a *Self-condemnation* by Nature;) yet it does not follow, that the End can be accomplish'd without competent Means, or a moral Effect be produced without a moral Cause. If the End is perverted and in danger of being lost thro' the Perversion and Deadness of the natural Means; and those Means are quickned with new Life and Soul, new principled with Acceptance and Aid from Heaven, and invigorated with Efficacy, Strength, and Alacrity of moral Operations; and all these proceed from *this Faith*, it must be obligatory and necessary, where it is presented, and known to be given for that End, that moral Effect of good Works, because that End is obligatory and necessary.

MORE especially, since God, who never does any thing in vain, has so expressly *commanded* this Faith in the *Mediator*, and indispensably connected it to that very End; we may be as morally certain of the Truth and Meaning of that Command, as of the Truth of the End. I acknowledge that when the End of the World comes, Faith vanishes; but as long as that is adjourn-

ed, I affirm, this must subsist in full Force and Virtue. It is an unaccountable Perverseness, and no less Inconsistency to receive and own the Revelation, where the Command is every where so plain, and yet declare it not obligatory. I have before prov'd at large*, that it is not an arbitrary Command for commanding sake, but carries its Reason with it; that Faith in *Christ as Son of God*, and *Son of Man*, renders him the *fittest* and *ablest* MEDIATOR, every way, that can be conceiv'd by human Reason; and how that Faith *presides* over all the Means, and by a moral Operation adjusted to a moral Agent, carries with it the Power of the most Divine Persuasion for regulating and improving the Natural Religion of the Means, Repentance, and Prayer, with proper Efficacy and Acceptance for perfecting the Religion of the End, to the saving of the Soul.

NATURE may rebel against *Principle*, but where there is no *Principle* to controul the Rebellion, there can be nothing but Anarchy with all the Licentiousness of Mis-rule. A Man may sometimes be worse than his Belief and recover himself; but it is as impossible for him ever to be better, as for the Stream to rise higher, or be better in Quality, than its Fountain-head. Health and Poison may as well consist together, in the same Constitution, as the safe Way to Salvation, and a wilful Corruption of the Faith of Christ in a meditated Departure from its true Use and Application for working out our own Salvation.

* Throughout the first Volume.

CHAP. XVIII. ACCORDING to Natural Religion, the Principle of Virtue is the seeking to please God by our Actions, in the Belief of his being a *Rewarder* of those that do so. That as we receive our Being and Powers of Action from him, so we are to receive our Happiness also from his rewarding Hands: *Without this Faith it is impossible to please him.* Consequently, Virtue, or Works, are no longer Works, than as they are actuated by, and done in Virtue of that Faith; nor will Faith be any longer Faith, than as it produces, and is bent upon producing Works: and Works so perform'd receive their Virtue and Power of pleasing from that Faith; whilst Faith itself is nothing at all without the other: but with them, makes them what they ought, or pretend to be, an Act of Religion. This is the Tree that Virtue grows upon; nor can there be any Fruits of true Virtue, in any Place of the Earth, without this Tree.

Now it has appear'd before that this Faith in God as a *Rewarder*, as general and implicit as it is, includes Faith in the *Mediator*, and secures all the moral Attributes concern'd in that glorious *Œconomy*; and therefore may serve, when duly kept up to, and reason'd upon, to please God, who is no Respector of Persons, in any part of the Earth. But as that Faith, thro' the Favour of God, in all Christian Nations, especially *Protestant*, is become so very explicit, and so very particular in all the Offices of a Mediator, it obliges Men, as they explicitly believe in God, so also to believe *explicitly* and *particularly* in the Mediator, in each of those his Offices, as before explain'd. And when God, who before commanded the Action, comes afterwards,

wards, to any People, and explicitly, and most expressly and very pressingly commands the MANNER of the Action, and in that manner displays a *Cornucopia* of the most convincing Arguments of entire Reconciliation, in Method and Manner of pleasing him; if the *Manner* so publish'd, and indispensably insisted upon, obliges, as well as the Action, (it being so necessary to comply with the *establish'd* Forms in Courts of Law and Equity, that all is rejected without it) they, who offer to rebel against the *Manner* of the Action, rebel against the Action itself, and make it of none effect to themselves. Their Virtues may truly be call'd *splendida peccata* (tho' the same Virtues in a Heathen Country are not so) being wilfully destitute of the known Principle of Virtue; where it is refractory to *Christ*, it cannot be pleasing; where it is ignorant of him, it may be acceptable to God; and the Mediator, who died for all Men, may be their unknown Friend and Intercessor.

BUT how should he regard those who have little or no Regard to his greatest Kindness, his Death, and Intercession? If that Tree of Christian Virtue is corrupt, the Fruit must be the same; and the only Way to mend the Fruit, is to mend the Tree in its Property of bearing what is acceptable to the Divine Majesty. The Tree is *Truth*, from Heaven, and the Fruit is *Holiness* in all its Branches. But if the Tree is split in halves (by denying the Divine Nature of the *Mediator*) and that half subdivided by the *Socinians*, how should Christian Fruit be expected? And therefore the *modo vitæ sanctimoniam salva sit*, is a sanctified Pretence, and mere Cant; a Ruination of Virtue, and of themselves too, if they persist therein.

CHAP. therein. Just such another false Courtship, XVIII. fawning Friendship, and flattering Admiration of its Beauty (in beautiful Language and meretricious Dress of Words, as most Flattery is made up of) as the Author of *Inquiry concerning it* professes; whilst at the same time he secretly stabs it to the Heart, depriving it of its greatest Recommendation, and most intrinsic Value of pleasing God, by a dutiful Oblation, Humility, and Dependence upon him, as a *Rewarder*; which is the true Principle of Virtue, and has been so from the Foundation of the World, and that is *Faith*; and may be call'd its *κρημα αίσιον*, and the Foundation of all acceptable Religion, Natural, or Reveal'd. Which being a dependent expectant Thing, Man is guided in either of them, by the Notion and Belief he has imbib'd of God that corresponds to it; and one of the *Ancients* accordingly makes that *suitable becoming Faith and Estimation of God the Basis, and Foundation of all Virtue* *; another the most *sovereign Regulator of all Godliness*. † Society in this World and the next makes the Happiness of Man in both; Law makes Society; and the Sanctions of Rewards and Punishments makes Law; which shews the Difference and affords right Notions of Governor and Governed, Creator and Creatures, God and Man.

III. THERE are DOUBTERS of this Faith, *Scepticks* by Principle. I would observe a few Things of the unreasonable, absurd Conduct of

* Βάσις γὰρ οἷμας ἡ ἐδραίωμα εἶναι πάντων τῶν ἀρετῶν ἀποδείκνυται Θεῷ δοξᾶν τε καὶ πιστεῖν. Orig. Dial. I. p. 1.

† Τὸ κυριώτατον τῆς εὐσεβείας. Epiet. c. 37.

these

these sort of Men before I give a direct Answer. CHAP. XVIII. They doubt the Principles of the *Atheist*, and no less doubt the Principles of the *four* sorts of *Deists* as enumerated by Dr. Clark.* In short, the Principles of all Religion, *Jewish, Mahometan, Pagan, Christian*, are equal Matter of Doubt to a thorough Sceptick. His Religion is to doubt of all Religion to the End of his Days; and so long as he continues to do so, is in as bad, or rather worse State than the *Atheist*, who rejects them all. This last acts with some Consistence, sins by Maxim and Principle, having no Restraint but the Laws of his Country, and the outward Appearance of false variable Honour, without any Disturbance from any religious Principle; and takes care to screen himself under the softer Name of *Deist*, as long as the other Appellation is shocking and odious in Sound.

BUT the *Sceptick* neither says in his heart there is no God, nor says, there certainly is one: he neither denies, nor affirms; and so has all the Inconveniencies of denying, without any of the Benefits of affirming and using. He practices upon no religious principle, Natural, nor Reveal'd: his Principle is still to postpone his intentions of being satisfied as to the Truth, some time hereafter; a worse fallacy than deferring Repentance to a Death-bed; for then they have the principle to seek, and be satisfied whether it is a Duty or not. All the time they should be obeying a plain Law for the good of themselves and the World, they spend in forming Syllogisms about Law, and Obedience;

† *Evidences of Nat. and Reveal'd Rel. p. 19, &c.*

and

CHAP. XVIII. and so live without Law. If they do any laudable action, it must be by Chance, or from some foreign motive, never out of Design; there being no fix'd Principle to design upon, and where that is not, there can be no Virtue; for whatsoever is not of Faith, *is Sin*. And as they live void of Consistency, and all Care of themselves, either as to the Principles, or Consequences of their actions, how can the Care of others do them any good, farther than endeavouring to convince them of a folly and absurdity, that exceeds all that is to be found among moral Agents, I mean Mankind; for they may, perhaps, doubt whether they are moral Agents, or not?

There are two extremes more or less culpable in the Conduct of the Understanding, with regard to Truth. (1). The conduct of most Mens Understanding towards Truth is so negligent and loose of Attention, that they take up with the smallest appearances, without distinguishing; they admit into their minds popular discourses and positions; and to save the trouble of examination, and be like their Neighbours, take the Truth of them for granted, and almost for sacred; they treasure up in their minds a confused heap of either obscure, often false, misunderstood, at least, unexamined particulars; upon these they reason and draw conclusions similar to the premises; little considering what they say or what they mean; they receive bad reasoning daily, and pay it away again: and because they think it a diminution to their Understanding to be ignorant of any thing, notwithstanding so many things are really hid from our knowledge; or to doubt of any thing, tho' so many others are

are wrapt up in uncertainty and ambiguity; CHAP. XVIII. hence it is you converse with so many mistaken minds, and almost as many positive people, who form a rash judgment of what they know confusedly and obscurely, decide peremptorily what they don't understand, nor have examin'd into.

2. THE Sceptick in order to avoid this too great credulity which he laughs at, runs into the contrary extreme, the worst extravagance of Understanding, a more ridiculous weakness than the former, and, at the same time, a most pernicious impudence in denying the Use of any Truth in Society, however constant, useful and indubitable the Truth is; and rather than be at the pains, or bear the requisite attention for separating mistakes and dross of error, he foolishly throws the Gold and Truth away together, and so impoverishes and strips his Understanding of that which was made to adorn, and enrich it, preserve and guide it.

THO' they are so scrupulous as to carry the doubting Humour to every thing without them, yet it is Madness to doubt their own Existence, or the Truth of what they feel *within* themselves; if any thing has a Title to the feeling Sense of Reality it must be that: but if the Truth of *that* is allow'd, the Truth of what is without unavoidably follows, because what is *without* concerns, and is relative to what is *within*.

THE Disputes among Christians are to him no manner of Justification. For they are nevertheless agreed in practising upon Fundamentals: but he allows no Certainty even as to *them*; affects the disputing Humour perpetually, and comes to no Resolution; and therefore being divided between

CHAP. XVIII. XVIII.
 between two contrary Interests, is distracted, and torn in Pieces by his own Doubts, and tossed in Mind perpetually like a Wave of the Sea, unstable in all his Ways; not having the Satisfaction of following the *Lord*, in case he is God, nor yet of following *Baal*, in case he is the God. And this *Vertigo* of Opinions, and Vanity of disputing every Thing, takes the Heart quite off from making any Application, or forming any Purpose of Practice; and thus the whole Life passes, and evaporates in Speculation, for Speculation sake, without any Thought of the true Use of it; with the greatest Dissatisfaction in Life, and, at the same Time, the least Reputation, as being void of all Sense and good Conduct, robbing himself of the true Use of his own Understanding, and of all Benefit of Truth and Knowledge; which is nothing else than, *dare operam ut cum ratione insaniat*, "to exert his Faculties in order to prove himself the most egregious Fool in the World." There is neither Seed-time, nor Harvest in his Calendar; if it was not for the Faith of his Neighbours he would be starved. He runs down *all* Wine as universally sophisticated (tho' he loves it well as it helps to Jest and Scorn of Religion) because, in this Country, a great deal is so. Thus the *Scorner seeketh the Wisdom* of finding out Cheats, *but never findeth it*, because he declines or rather scorns the common *distinguishing* Methods of finding; with him *all Things* are Cheats: and what is the sagacious Consequence of all this, but to live the smile of Co-temporaries, and be remember'd as a painful Tormenter, and Arch-Deceiver of himself? So wretched a Seat is the Seat of Scorners! He needs no Hell to revenge the first; and the latter bespeaks a Madhouse, or is

a Fool's Cap. For is not that man deservedly the Jest of all the World, who makes a Jest of all Truth? CHAP. XVIII.

It is impossible for him to answer to himself, the Hazard he runs; for, if the Truths of Christianity are but possible, he acts not wisely; if probable, very imprudently; if certain, his Conduct is most miserable, enthusiastick, and mad. And as to the Capacity of raising a Dispute, there is no Honour nor Reputation in it, unless it is the Credit of excelling others in Vain-glory, Perverseness of Spirit, and a bad Heart join'd to a good Memory, and voluble Fancy, bent upon the worst Purpose, of unsettling every Thing valuable in human Society; every Thing more or less being capable of Dispute, mathematical Demonstration excepted.

I PROCEED to consider the Objections of these *Scepticks*. The Author of *Characteristicks* lays his down in these Words, "Whoever is not conscious of Revelation, nor has certain Knowledge of any Miracle or Sign, can be no more than *Sceptick* in the Case: And the best Christian in the World, who being destitute of the Means of *Certainty*, depends only on History and Tradition for his Belief in these Particulars, is at best but a *Sceptick* Christian."*

THE Author of *Christianity as old*, &c. has these Words; "That God reveal'd his Will, any way besides the Light of Nature, can only come under the Head of Probability."†
 "And as there can be no Demonstration of the

* Vol. III. p. 72.

† p. 162.

" Re-

CHAP. "Revelation itself, so neither can there be any
 VXIII. "of its Conveyance to Posterity; much less
 "that this or that has been convey'd entire to
 "distant Times and Places."—"Nay the very
 "Nature of Probability is such, that were it
 "left to Time itself, even that would wear it
 "quite out*, at least if it be true, what *Ma-*
 "thematiens pretend to demonstrate, viz:
 "That the Probability of Facts, depending upon
 "human Testimony, must gradually lessen in
 "proportion to the Distance of Time when
 "they were done."

THE first supposes, there is no *Certainty* sufficient to assure us of the Truth of the Christian Religion, less than *Eye-sight* of Miracles and Signs. The second supposes, there is no Foundation for believing it, but only Probability; the Nature of which, he says, is such, *that the Progress of Time will wear it quite out*. In answer to both, I shew,

1. THAT the Evidence of *our* Faith is built upon *moral* Certainty.

2. THAT that Certainty does not in the least diminish by *Progress* of Time.

THE Absurdities that overtake the first Supposition are so many, and so flagrant, that the bare mention of some of them is sufficient to expose the Futility of such an Objection. In order to make Christians, or make them certain of their Faith, it supposes, that Christ ought to live and die, rise again and work Miracles in every Age, in every Country, in every

* s. 163.

City

City or Town in the World successively; or, at CHAP.
 least, that the Apostles and Messengers of that XVIII.
 Faith must continue so to do, to evince the Certainty of it: which is to destroy the very End and Use of Miracles. A strange Demand from a *Deist*! who all agree to make a Jest of the Testimony of Miracles, and yet insist upon them. Ridiculous Perverseness in Perfection!

THE Sight of Miracles, particularly that great one, *Christ risen from the Dead*, is, by Implication, affirm'd in the Record of them to be *infallible Proofs*; and they undoubtedly are so. The Conviction they bring to the Beholder is so rousing, and in a manner irresistible; that, one would imagine, they could never fail of necessitating Assent to the Truth of the Doctrines they were brought to prove; yet we know, some of the Beholders of many of them, rather than receive the Doctrines, absurdly imputed that very Proof to a quite different Author, the greatest Adversary to the Doctrines in the World. And if such a Proof is resistible, it follows, that Miracles *seen* work Conviction only in a *moral* Way; and that Miracles *believ'd* and undenied as to the Matter of Fact of them, soon after they were seen, and so to the End of the World, will produce no Conviction upon those who will not embrace the Doctrines; and that Evasions against that Testimony, tho' never so undeniable, will ever be offer'd by such, in excuse for not embracing.

THIS is notorious with respect to *Celsus*, *Julian*, *Porphyry*, bitter, potent, learned Enemies of the Christian Doctrine. They acknowledg'd the *Matter of Fact* of such being really wrought, and

CHAP. and were no Imposture, in those who testified
XVIII. the Faith; yet had no effect, nor ever will have
upon any resolv'd Enemy to such Doctrines, deter-
min'd to continue bad, because they are too
good and contrary to them, to be receiv'd.
Therefore it need not be added, that if the Truth
of those Miracles could not be objected to,
then, when the Circumstances of Time, Per-
sons, Places were all recent, and no Opportunity
nor Ability wanting to have detected the For-
gery, they must remain undeniable and invin-
cible to all Ages after. How absurd therefore
is that *Sceptical* Infination, "There being at
"present no immediate Testimony of *Miracle*
"or *Sign* in behalf of holy Writ—That the
"holy *Records* themselves were no other than
"the pure Invention or artificial Compiement
"of an *interested Party*, in behalf of the *richest*
"Corporation and most profitable *Monopoly*
"which cou'd be erected in the World." *

NOTHING is probable itself in *rerum na-
tura*; because every thing really is, or really
is not; and therefore naturally certain that it
is, or naturally certain that it is not. But with
respect to the Recipient, or judging Faculty,
whether the Thing is, or is not, or in such Cir-
cumstances, or not, the Conveyance of the Truth,
and the judging Faculty being both *fallible*; we
cannot have, from the Nature of Things, an
infallible Certainty or Demonstration: neverthe-
less, we have, at the same Time, plenty of
rational, moral, human Certainty, such Evidence
as the Nature of the Things is only capable of
being proved by: and as it extinguishes and

* *Character*. Vol. III. 236.

cludes all Doubting, upon the just Grounds CHAP.
and moral Reasons of doubting, is equivalent XVIII.
to that Infallibility which belongs not to our Na-
ture; or to that Demonstration, which it is in-
capable of receiving, in any Thing, but *Mathe-
maticks*. So that there may be a most sufficient,
moral, conclusive Certainty, at the same Time
there is an understanding Faculty naturally falli-
ble, and a natural Possibility that the Thing may
be otherwise.

THIS is evidently the Spring of all human
Action, either with respect to this World, or
the next, in regard to every thing we don't see
ourselves; and yet at the same Time, there is
all moral Assurance, full Certainty and *imputed*
Substance of the Things themselves; and so their
Affections, and Relations to us, and our Mo-
rals, become certain. Consequently, Faith is a
Virtue, because it is an Assent, not from Sight,
but Reason, upon Argument *morally* persuasive;
that it need not, ought not, cannot always be
upon Sight, and yet is nevertheless as true and
certain in the Eye of Reason, in every moral
Agent, as if it was. And is more commend-
able and rewardable for being founded in Rea-
son; *Blessed are they who have not seen and yet
have believed*. A Conviction from the Evidence
of Reason is more valuable in the Sight of God,
than that from Sense; and this standing Ar-
gument, ever the same, of the ever endur-
ing Gospel, is more worthy of its perpetual
Dignity, and its universal Importance, than the
sensible temporary Proofs of it. The superior
Blessing of believing without seeing, throws the
Argument of all future Belief out of the Testi-
mony of Sense, into the more human Testimony
Vol. II. T of

CHAP. of divine History and the Evidence of Reason
XVIII. thereupon.

AND consequently it must be a very idle Listening, and incogitant Credulity to imagine, that any after *Apparition* from the *Dead* should ever be able to make that certainer than our Lord ever intended it should be, to future Generations; or, that it can be any thing less than a Disparagement to him, and his Gospel, to be willing to call in a-fresh the Evidence of *Sense*, after that had been so irrefragably establish'd by *his own Resurrection* from the *Dead*; and he has determin'd, and given the Preference, in addressing and limiting the Persuasion of his Gospel to the *reasoning*, more than to the seeing Faculties of his Christians. Was an Apparition from the *Dead* in every Age and Place, any Divine Argument of a future State, where there is a standing Revelation, not only of *Moses* and the *Prophets*, but of *Christ* and his *Apostles*, every Christian has a Right to expect it: But as they are forbid to expect it, there is the less Reason for any to pretend to those officious Proofs, or for others to believe the Report.

THE Virtue of believing consists in being morally, and therefore dutifully, satisfied of the Truth of Things not cognizable to our personal Senses, which concern us as moral Agents; and most moral Truths are of this Nature. *Mathematical* Demonstration shews the Subject of its Science to be true, from the *Impossibility* of its being otherwise. What Thanks, what Virtue in believing what one can't help, or hinder believing? But as the Will can, and does help or hinder believing in the other Case, Unbelief is a
1 Sin,

Sin, and Belief a Virtue, where there is *sufficient* Evidence: And as there is more of *Will*, than Understanding in Matters of plain, practical Faith, therefore Sin and Duty, Reward and Punishment, are annex'd to the Transgression, or Obedience of Faith.
CHAP. XVIII.

No Man can have any Inclination that *mathematical* Demonstration should not be true; being opposite to nothing that he chuses or refuses, as a moral Agent. But when the Evidence of the other sort, as cogent in its kind, as the other in its kind, happens cross to Inclination irregularly indulg'd, we know what a bad Chance it stands, of being received: Here the Will is particularly affected in the reigning Interest of its Purposes, and puts itself into an opposing or refusing Posture; but being unconcern'd in the other Truth, because no moral Good or Evil issues from it, it has nothing to object.

WHAT gives the moral Certainty, is of like Nature with that, in many Cases, which affords *mathematical* Certainty, *i. e.* if the contrary Supposition involves a moral Absurdity, or Impossibility in the general Course of human Belief, safely trusting unseen Things to be true; which is so absolutely necessary in the World, and is the Law that holds Society together, in its essential Mutuality of Trust. If it is *morally* impossible it should be otherwise, with respect to the first Testifiers of the Christian Faith, or their Conveyance of it to others, that they should be deceived themselves, or have any Design of deceiving others; supposing Mankind to act upon the common known Principles which influence their Actions, and their own Faculties to be so
T 2 commonly

CHAP. XVIII. commonly true as not to deceive them; then the *moral* Certainty of the Truth of their Testimony, and the Conveyance of it to us, is unexceptionable.

WHEN the *Sceptick* practises his Doubts upon the Principle of believing nothing certain, nor any Persons, nor any Record to be sufficiently credible, because there is a *natural Possibility* of Deception; he acts upon a Principle that dissolves, by suspending the Obligations to moral Duties; he does his best to bring Ruin and Confusion into Society; he undermines the Support of all Civil Government, and Administration of Justice; and overthrows all History, all Science, all Trust in the World: Which being so dreadful an Absurdity, and so great a Contradiction to the Perfections of God the Author and Governor of Society, against his suffering such an Evil and Deception in the World, it must be morally impossible that such a Principle can be right, or true; and therefore Belief upon sufficient Evidence is morally certain and authentick. But to offer to support such a Principle by Testimony of former Times, is intolerably worse; because that is acknowledging the Validity and the sufficient Evidence of *Testimony*, when it makes for them, and doubting it always, as often as it makes against them.

MR. *Hobbs* himself is forc'd to allow "the admitting Propositions upon *Trust* in many Cases, to be no less free from *Doubt* than perfect and manifest Knowledge: For as there is nothing whereof there is not some Cause; so when there is *Doubt*, there must be some Cause thereof conceiv'd. Now there be many

CHAP. XVIII. " things which we receive from *Report of others*, of which it is impossible to imagine any Cause of *Doubt*: For what can be oppos'd against the Consent of all Men, in things they can know, and have no Cause to report otherwise than they are (such is the great Part of our *Histories*) unless a Man would say, that all the World had conspir'd to deceive him *." Now, tho' the Testimony is never so plainly from God, and the Record thereof supported by the most unexceptionable Historical Evidence (which is all the Evidence the truest Narration is capable of, nor is there any Evidence or Truth of Things surer than that of some History) still, it is in the Power of Man, especially under the Bias of irregular Affection, or culpable Prejudice, to suspend his Assent to Truths never so well attested, and conveyed; by not suffering his Understanding to attend sufficiently, if at all, to the Credibility, or Importance of the Things spoken of; regarding neither the internal, nor external Evidence that evince their Certainty, and their Excellency. And such is their Excellency, the less the Truth concerns us, the more fallible and various will human Judgment ever be; the more generally important those Truths are, so much the clearer the Perception, so much the more certain and unanimous the Judgment.

IT is abominably shameful in the Author of *Christianity as old, &c.* barely to repeat the stale Objection of *various Readings* in Diminution of the Credit of the Conveyance of those Truths, after they have been so confounded in it, and put

* *Tripot*, or *Three Discourses*, pag. 36.

CHAP. XVIII. to flight by *Phileleutherus Lipsienfis*, and not able to rally the least Reply, after so many Years study for it. Especially, when it is confess'd on all Hands, that no one Matter of Fact, or Faith, or Practice, in any of the *material* Things that concern Salvation, are in the least affected by them; but all remain as entire as if they came fresh from the *Apostles* Hand-writing. They themselves overlook abundantly more various Readings in every *prophane* Author of like Antiquity, as no Impeachment or Objection at all.

BESIDES there is a further moral Assurance to Christians, in common, and Security enough against any Doubting, from *monumental* Practice grounded upon the first Establishment, for preserving the Memory from Father to Son, from Age to Age, in the Observation of *Baptism*, the *Lord's Supper*, *Easter-day* annually, and the *Lord's-day* weekly; which hand down the Death, Resurrection, and the other great Articles of our Faith. The Resurrection of Christ, and Ascension to Heaven, is moreover an easy, short, effectual Argument to every plain Christian, of the Resurrection of our Bodies, the Immortality of the Soul, and a future State, beyond any labour'd Proof. Nor,

2. DOES the moral Certainty of the Evidence of Faith diminish by *Progress of Time*. For with Respect to that *first* and primary Care, there is, besides the Providence of God, the moral Argument from the Principles Mankind always act upon, in the constant, and common Concern of transmitting to Posterity Important Facts and Truths, which concern them, as much

as

as themselves. And if Men are so careful of transmitting to Posterity *Greek*, and *Roman* History of worldly Transactions, when, by the common Vicissitudes of earthly Dominion, the Concern of After-Ages will indeed diminish, and die away in Process of Time in proportion to the Distance; can they neglect to transmit that, with equal Care, wherein themselves were so deeply interested, and latest Posterity no less?

THE Interest and Concern that Posterity may have in recorded Facts is one Thing, and the Truth and Certainty of those Facts quite another; the former indeed may thro' Distance of Time and Place dwindle into nothing, whilst the other remains, and will, as long as the Record lasts, for ever remain as true and certain, as at the first recording; if true then, it must always continue so. Accordingly, who doubts the Truth of the *Greek*, *Roman*, or other authentick Histories, any more now, than a thousand Years ago? Whilst our immediate Concern in any of them is worn out and come to nothing. But in the other Case, the Truth and the Concern are the same, and will remain so to the End of the World; I mean, that Men ought ever to shew the same Concern for Truths they may be morally certain of, and are as much interested in, as those that first committed them to Writing.

If the Certainty of those Things whereof they affirm loses any thing of its Force and Conviction, by Succession of Time, it must proceed from the Diminution of the Reasons, and Deception of the attesting Circumstances, which made the first Witnesses and Testifiers credible.

T 4

But

CHAP. XVIII. But if none of these has lessen'd or varied, nor can lessen or vary to the latest Ages; then the Truth will be as well testified to the latest Posterity (considering the Assistance of Printing) as it was at first, *one Day* in that Case *certifieth another: As it was in the Beginning, is Now, and ever shall be.* If they were *Eye-Witnesses* of the Facts at first, they will continue the very same, before the Eyes of all the reading, and to the Ears of all the hearing World, to the Consummation of all Things. If they were not only capable, but *honest, faithful, consistent* Witnesses; not only honest, and consistent among themselves, but *confirm'd from Heaven* by the Power of working Miracles; not only confirm'd from thence, but, like Lambs among Wolves, *endur'd all Affliction and laid down their Lives* for the Testimony: If their Testimony was not only not contradicted, but *co-attested* by co-temporary, *foreign* History of other Nations: And if all these were the ratifying Reasons, and ascertaining Circumstances of the Truth at first, they will continue in the same Force of Persuasion and Conviction for ever; nor will they ever be spent, or exhausted: Because they remain *recorded* and represented in the same unvaried State, for ever.

NOT to mention from Progress of Time the increasing Addition of Attestations, from the gradual fulfilling of Prophecies, which remotest Posterity will have the Advantage of; and consequently that *Progress* of Time, instead of invalidating, will accumulate Strength to the Evidences of Christianity, and banish Infidelity from off the Earth, by the all convincing Lustre of its Truth, in the Experience of so many Ages.

The

The farther the Stream of Prophetick and Even-CHAP. tual Truth runs from its Spring Head, the first XVIII. *Promise* of God to Man, the larger it grows, it bears down all Denial, and drowns Scepticism, (laying hold of every Twig to save itself) very deep.

THAT mathematical Book therefore of a Reverend Author alluded to in the Margin, though I have not the Opportunity of seeing it, if it should happen to be calculated to make out the Truth of that Text, *Nevertheless when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find Faith on Earth?* If that End is mistaken, the whole Process must be a Mistake; or at least an egregious Impertinence, as being founded upon a wrong *Hypothesis*, (though I rather presume that *such* an Author could not be in earnest.) Nor can *Mathematicks* have any thing to do in the Affair, any farther than common *Arithmetick* counting up the afore-said attesting Circumstances, and the gradual Diminution of their Credibility, in Time; the contrary of which I have made appear. For the Faith there spoken of cannot be understood, and ought not to be extended to any other sort of Faith, than what our Lord was then discoursing about, or its similar Case; and that is plainly the *Son of Man avenging the Elect speedily* by the Destruction of the *Jews*: Yet they began to think the Delay so long, that many cried out, *Where is the Promise of his coming?* Many forsook the assembling themselves together, and reverted to *Judaism*; and there were but few left, who believed the *Speediness* of that Vengeance or Coming of the Son of Man, till they were surpriz'd

* Luke xviii. 8.

with

CHAP. with the Suddenness of it. So likewise at the XVIII. Day of Judgment, there will be but little Faith as to the Suddenness and Unexpectedness, though premonish'd of it; Men will be equally surpriz'd, all too careless, and too many unprovided.

I CONCLUDE therefore with Respect to the *Scepticks*, that they are not only inexcusable to themselves, but *Criminals* against God, and Society; by considering such important Truths and such sufficient Evidences of them carelessly and negligently; *suspending* all proper Resolution, and affecting always to *doubt* the Truth. Tho' if they allow any one thing to be *certain*, suppose their own Existence, if they have not the Assurance to doubt of that, that is sufficient to confute and confound the Absurdity of their Humour. The Certainty of their own Existence unavoidably proves the certain Existence, the Nature, and Attributes of God; whence follows the Truth of Religion, the Refutation of what is false, the fixing and ascertaining, and the clearing up of all Doubtfulness, in what is most valuable and concerning. But it is certain they are secret, tho' undeclar'd Enemies of the Faith, not openly throwing off Friendship to it, whilst they retain Hatred at the Heart, and consequently in their Actions and Conduct are worse than the *Deist*, who is an open avow'd Adversary. And therefore it is inconsistent in the latter, after they have openly declar'd themselves Enemies and Rejecters of Faith, to put on the *Sceptick* in their Argument; for that is rejecting absolutely and retaining it, at the same time, at least in the appearance of Suspence.

IV. THERE

IV. THERE are NEGLECTERS of this Faith, among the outward Professors of it. As the three former are guilty of Immorality thro' a vicious Will, rejecting, or corrupting, or suspending Assent to the Faith, so these are guilty, by suspending Practice suitable to it. These are the most numerous, and too many of them the Seminary of the other; having a Tendency and Disposition to grow up in time into some of the former. When an Age is very much degenerated in Practice contrary to its Principles, it is naturally inclin'd and prepar'd to receive Principles that are more favourable to such Practices, and People so dispos'd can hardly miss of them, as they so openly proffer themselves every where; and as they spread and are imbib'd, the Overflowing of Ungodliness rises so much the higher in its Stream, and will bear no Controul.

ALL the holy Truths and Duties of Christianity, deriving from their Fountain-Head, Faith in the *Mediator*, operate always, in all Persons, in proportion as they are heartily assented to, understood, consider'd, and used as the Religion of the Means for carrying on the Religion of the End, *i. e.* the fulfilling all obligations to God, our Neighbour, and Ourselves; those true practical Ends, for the sake of which, the other become our Profession and Denomination. The degree of Piety and Good-works may answer up to, and be in the Proportion of *Thirty*, *Sixty*, or an *Hundredfold*; but can't exceed: Therefore there must be the like degrees and proportion in Faith causing those Productions, by a more or less Consideration, or hearty Application of those ever necessary Motives and Springs

CHAP. Springs of Christian obedience, where-ever that
XVIII. Faith is sufficiently promulg'd.

A DUBIOUS Life made up of Ebbs and Flows of Virtue and Vice may very well become a dubious Faith of a future State; as was the Case of the Heathen Philosophers. But, without all doubt, it ought to be otherwise settled with Christians.

THE primitive Christians consider'd them, understood them, and apply'd them vigorously as the most divine Means, true in Proof, potent in Effect to that End; which made their Lives and their Faith so gloriously shine before Men, zealous of good Works; suffering any thing for its sake, and so adorning the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all things; neither being ashamed of Christ, nor a Shame to him, in any thing*; then did his Religion personally shine forth in a convincing, divine, irresistible Evidence. Their Baptism, as it ought, did indeed represent to them their Profession, which is *to follow Christ and be made like unto him, dying unto Sin and rising to Righteousness, and daily proceeding in all Godliness and Virtue*; and the Lord's Supper, or breaking of Bread frequently, refresh'd them, comforted them, and help'd to make them *servant in Spirit serving the Lord*. Faith in the mediatorial Kingdom had a despotick Rule over those hearty Subjects, for Improvement and Perfection in Godliness, and Goodness; it had a *Lordly*

* Dicimus et palam dicimus, et vobis torquentibus lacerati vociferamur, *Deum colimus per Christum*, Tertul. Apol. c. 21. *Hæc omnia faciunt, non propter ardorem inanis Gloriæ, sed propter caritatem Felicitatis eternæ.* Augustin.

Dominion

Dominion over the Disciple, when he took the Name Christian, he submitted as to his Sovereign Lord, the After-conduct of his Will, Words, and Deeds, they were all cheerfully and absolutely controul'd by its Laws: They never lost Sight of their solemn Engagements; they daily remembred them as the Capital Maxim of their Conduct: whilst now-a-days every seditious Tribune of Self-sufficiency, or inordinate Affection, disputes the Authority; or is very indifferent to the Government; makes *Sacramental* Resolutions in order to remember them no more, or be nothing the better for them. The Degrees of Faith, in the ordinary Course of Providence, will ever arise out of the greater, or less Degree of Mens assenting to, and putting them also in use as such, to such Purpose.

THE modern Reason why the Lives of so many Christians are unlike their holy Profession is, because they don't examine the Grounds and the Nature of their Faith, to know the Certainty and the Purport of it, for giving it an effectual Force upon their Minds, in referring its indubitable Design to holy and righteous Practice; they have but an half-persuasion of the Certainty of it, tho' attested with a full Evidence; they afford an indolent Assent in general that such things *may be*, rather, than that they assuredly are, and that our Salvation and Happiness depend upon the right Reception and Application of them; a Method of not disbelieving, rather than believing in any Earnest, or to any Purpose. How very many in these Kingdoms have been educated in the Christian Religion, yet how very few have embraced it

as

CHAP. XVIII. as the Effect of a deliberate Choice? They bestow their simple Approbation as on a Fashion or Custom of their Country, and had they been born and brought up in any other, of another Persuasion, they would have done the very same; and therefore if the Fashion of the Faith should vary, or threaten a Variation by the Desertion of Numbers, they are ready to come into it: because, as a personal, obligatory, covenanted, saving Thing they regard it not at all. This is that frequent, fruitless, *feigned* Faith, the reverse of that *unfeigned Faith* which is appointed to head a *pure Conscience*. And what pity it is, what Reproach and Scandal to the Reason of many Christians, that their continual Inconsideration, Negligence, and Carelessness in those Things which they profess they do believe, and which they acknowledge they can do, should so constantly, and with so much Aggravation, undo so many of them!

THEY either consider them not as what they are, Means, but as what they are not; and so rest in them, as the End, *παρέργον ἔργον*; as able to acquit them of the moral Law, or dispense with some Disobedience, or raise Hope of Justification, or, thro' some other false defeating Opinions mixing with it, defeat its Intention. Or, if they take them to be Means, they nevertheless employ them not at all, or negligently, and unconstantly; and so either way shame their Profession, and so relinquish the serene Benefits, Comforts, and Heavenly Benedictions of their Faith, for the horrible Accusation, and Condemnation thereof.

THAT

THAT Animadversion may possibly be too just, with respect to some few, "who went from Church to Chapel, from Chapel to Church, and were punctual in all Church Ceremonies, without regarding the End for which they could be instituted: So, that instead of being humble, affable, and good, they have proved big with the worst sort of Pride, Spiritual Pride; censuring and despising their Neighbours, though ever so good, if they were not as punctual as themselves in observing those Things; and the Conceit they had of their own Godliness, has made them as troublesome at Home as Abroad, as bad Wives as Neighbours.*" It is commendable to learn even from an Enemy. But these Considerations do not fall under my present Design.

I CONCLUDE therefore, that this Faith in the *Mediator*, as before represented, purposely reveal'd for influencing the Christian Life, and invigorating the degenerated Powers of Man to good Works, is so necessary, so morally necessary to both, (where it is made known) that they depend upon it as their *moral Cause*; and consequently, that a Rejection, or Corruption, or habitual Doubting, or Neglect in the former, is that inward Principle of Immorality, which produces the same in the latter. Such as the Tree is, such will be the Fruit. Where there is Unbelief, there will be Impenitency, Apostasy from Prayer, and a Subsidence into all evil

* *Christianity as old, &c.* pag. 122.

Works

CHAP. XVIII. Works either of Flesh, or Spirit, or both. But when there is Faith towards our *Lord Jesus Christ* in serious Earnest, and to its true Purpose, there will be true Repentance towards God, with true Devotion, and every good Work: And the Increase and Steadiness of every Christian's Virtue will be in proportion, to their Increase and Steadiness in that Faith in the Mediator.



CHAP.



CHAP. XIX.

A Proper Answer to the DEIST, objecting the Want of Universality to the Christian Religion.

L RESERVE this to the last, and thought once of throwing it into an Appendix, as being an Objection rather to the Ways of Divine Providence, than to the intrinsic Merits of Christianity. But as these Objectors are very impertinent, in laying so great a Stress upon it, and immodestly importunate in so often repeating it, since the first starting by *Porphyry*, who was himself an *Epicurean* * as to his Philosophy,

* For *Epicurean* read *Platonist*. This indeed maims that part of the preliminary Observation; but as it is Truth, upon farther Inquiry, it must in Conscience be submitted to. And I take this Opportunity to thank the ingenious Gentleman [See *Fog's Journal* 13 Nov. 1736. being a Letter from a *Deist* converted upon reading this Book] for his Correction of the Mistake, and to beg the Correction of all other Mistakes from every other learned Hand, in a Cause of such Dignity and Importance; promising, they shall be publickly acknowledged, in Case they prove Mistakes, to the generous Corrector, who does me that Honour and Favour. I am the more obliged to the Candor of the learned Letter Writer, for making his Judgment of my imperfect Performance, from the *main Drift* and *Design* of it, and at the same time generously overlooking not a few Inaccuracies and lesser Faults, that escaped in the first Edition by one Means or other,

CHAP. phy, and consequently unconcern'd as to Pro-
XIX. *vidence*; the Objection therefore from the Be-
ginning is plainly a *wrested* Occasion for asper-
sing Christianity; because all the Lines being strait
and simply drawn from that true Center of Divi-
nity, *God in Christ reconciling the World to himself*,
make the most comprehensive establish'd Circum-
ference of Reason and Probity, true Religion
and Divine Worship, godly, sober, and righte-
ous Living. I shall return them a PROPER
Answer, by and by, after I have first begg'd
leave of the Reader to premise some general
Considerations upon this Subject. The Objection
in its full Strength, is as follows.

"If we suppose any arbitrary Commands in
the Gospel, we place Christians in a worse
Condition than those under no Law but that
of Nature, which requires nothing but what
is moral; and consequently the greatest Part
of Mankind, who are to be judg'd by the
Law they know, and not by the Law they do

other, forming his Taste like a Gentleman and Scholar, by
the Rule of the *best* Critick,

Verum ubi plura nitent ———

Non ego paucis
Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria sudit,
Aut Humana parum cavet Natura.

HOR.

The Publick is the more engaged to his ingenuous Ac-
knowledgments, because he seems to place all the real
Charms and Beauty of good Writing in *Divinity*, in the Dis-
play of *Truth*, in a *plain Dress*; the enduring Solidity of it
in the Appearance of the *Nature of Things* in concert with
Revelation, without any Art, or Pious Fraud; and the Use of
it in the Importance of the Subject: And, that being what
is, or can be, the only true Religion, is the very greatest
Concern in this World.

"not

CHAP. "not know, are, on this Supposition, in a bet-
XIX. ter Condition as to the next World than
Christians; because they do not *bazard* the
Favour of God by any Mistakes, or Omissions
in such matters. To suppose some Men, who
tho' they exactly obey the Law of Nature,
may yet be punish'd, even eternally, for not
obeying another Law besides; would be to
make God deal infinitely less mercifully with
them, than with those who have no other
Law: And yet in this miserable Case are all
Christians involv'd, if the Gospel requires such
Things as the Law of Nature does not; and
that too under the severest Penalties——They
who think Original and *Traditional* Religion
don't differ, are *free* (no small Happiness)
from all *panick* Fears; while they, who be-
lieve there are things merely positive in Reli-
gion, of which Reason affords no Light how
they are to be perform'd, or even what they
are, must lie under endless *Doubts* and *Fears*."*
——Must it not be suppos'd, that either God,
in creating Mankind, did not design their fu-
ture Happiness; or else that tho' he design'd
it, he prescrib'd them such Means, or gave
them such Rules, as either were not sufficient
at first, or in Process of Time became in-
sufficient for that End? but that after Men
had been for many Ages in this miserable
Condition, God thought fit to mend the eter-
nal universal Law of Nature, by adding cer-
tain Observances to it, *not founded in the Rea-
son of Things*; and that those, out of his par-
tial Goodness, he communicated only to some,
leaving the greatest Part in their former dark

* *Christian. as old*, p. 109, 110.

CHAP. XXI. “and deplorable State.—How is it consistent
 “with the Notion of God’s being universally
 “benevolent, not to have reveal’d it to all his
 “Children, when all had equal need of it? Was
 “it not as easy for him to have communicated
 “it to *all* Nations, as to any one Nation, or
 “Person? *——“God requir’d Impossibilities
 “from them, *viz.* either to preserve themselves
 “from thus falling, or if fallen to recover
 “themselves. But if they had not Power to
 “do this, and it was not their Fault, that they
 “at first were in, and after remain’d in a State
 “of universal Degeneracy and Corruption, this
 “must then be the State God design’d they
 “should be in: And it would seem not only to
 “be in vain, but a *Crime* in them to endeavour
 “to change that State in which God, of his in-
 “finite Wisdom and Goodness, thought fit to
 “place them.” † “If God always acts for
 “the Good of his Creatures, what Reason can
 “be assign’d, why he should not, from the *Be-*
 “*ginning*, have discover’d such things as make
 “for their Good; but defer the doing of it till
 “the Time of *Tiberius*? Since the sooner this
 “was done, the greater would his Goodness ap-
 “pear to be.—If God acts upon rational Mo-
 “tives, must not the same Motives which
 “oblig’d him to discover any thing for the
 “Good of Mankind, have oblig’d him to dis-
 “cover *every thing* that is so—and not grudg-
 “ingly *here a Bit and there a Bit*—and at
 “last, tho’ he discover’d some things more
 “plainly, yet it was to a small Part of Man-
 “kind, the Bulk of them to this Day remaining
 “in deplorable Ignorance.” ‡ “Would not

* Page 173. † Page 340. ‡ Page 365.

“the

“the Necessities of Mankind and the Goodness CHAP.
 “of God oblige him to have *prescribed an im-* XIX.
 “*mediate Remedy* to the Disease, and not de-
 “fer’d it for four thousand Years together?” *
 “Is not this Notion repugnant to the natural
 “Idea we have of the Divine Goodness? As
 “likewise those express Texts of Scripture,
 “which declare *God is no Respector of Persons*;
 “that *every one, of what Nation soever, shall be*
 “*rewarded according to his Works*, and that *Men*
 “*are accepted according to what they have, and*
 “*not according to what they have not.*” † If God
 “never intended Mankind should at any time be
 “*without Religion*, or have false Religions, and
 “there be but *one true Religion*, which *all* have
 “been ever bound to believe and profess, the
 “Means to effect this End of infinite Wisdom,
 “must be as universal and extensive as the End
 “itself.” ‡

THIS is the Objection in its full Length, and
 with its utmost Force: It supposes several
 things in Contradiction to Truth, and Matter of
 Fact. As

1. IT supposes arbitrary Commands in the
 Christian Religion, which I have confuted at
 large before; and that the Receivers of its *pe-*
culiar Institutions run greater *bazard* of the
 Favour of God, than the Rejecters of them;
 that these last are free from *panick* Fear, whilst
 the other lie under endless Doubts and Fears.

2. THAT God did not prescribe sufficient
 Means for Mens Happiness at first, from the

* Page 363. † Page 371. ‡ Page 4.

U 3

Beginning,

Beginning, or an immediate Remedy to the Disease; but deferr'd it for 4000 Years till the Time of *Tiberius*, and then communicated it only to a *small Part* of Mankind; and that it would be a *Crime* in those, to whom the Means and Remedy of Happiness was not explicitly reveal'd, to endeavour to help themselves in their dark and deplorable State: It supposes further, that the Means and Remedy is *not founded in the Reason of Things*; the contrary of which last Position I have made appear throughout the preceding Treatise.

3. THAT this partial Proceeding of Providence is contrary to the Notion and Idea we have of the Divine Goodness; and to that Character, of being *no Respector of Persons*. And that, as there is but *one true Religion*, the Means ought to be as general as the End, and as explicitly known to one Nation as to another.

BEFORE I reply particularly, I would observe in general. 1. Supposing this World made (no uncommon Opinion) to supply the Place of *fallen Angels*, one World arising out of the Ruins of another; God may chuse so many Elect out of our World (and when a Person is *elected* it seems to be to some *Vacancy*) in what part he pleases. Supposing further, what seems highly probable, that those Angels were graduated and differenc'd by different Endowments, some having *one Talent*, more *two*, but most of them *five* committed to them; the Scripture actually distinguishes them into *Principalities*, *Powers*, *Rulers of the Darkness of this World*, and *spiritual Wickedness in high Places*, all fighting in their Courses, and contending against Men, especially

cially *Christians*; then the fewest were to be elected out of the *Heathen World*, some out of the *Jews*, but most out of the *Christians*, who have receiv'd the *five Talents* here below. God the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, with the *holy Angels*, all interest themselves, and offer Qualifications to the *Christian*, if they will but *consent*, and use proper Endeavours to be elected. All that are called might be *chosen*; and it is thro' their own Defect that *many are called, and few chosen*. The wicked Angels oppose it with all their Devices, and Might: And all the Might and Chance they have in the Opposition is owing to the Folly, Inconstancy, and Abuse of Liberty in the *Candidate*. And what sharpens the Vigilance and Keeness of the Opposition is, out of regard to their own Interest; that they might thereby prevent the Numbers of the *Elect* from being compleated, as long as they can, and so defer the evil Day, the *Day of Judgment*, as late as possible; and towards alleviating the Miseries of that Day, in the meantime, gather up all the *Associates* they can, in the Calamity prepar'd for them.

2. IT is not true in Fact, that God did not prescribe sufficient Remedy to the Disease, or afford sufficient Means for Mens Happiness, but deferr'd it for 4000 Years till the Time of *Tiberius*. As the Will of God was directed by the greatest Wisdom and Goodness in appointing different Degrees of Happiness or Rewards hereafter, according to the different Use Men make of their moral Powers in pursuing it in this Life, in the diligent and due Application of the Means he severally put in their Power; so, from the first Prevarication in Happiness, or be-

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ginning of the Disease, he prescrib'd one uniform, potent, adequate Remedy, to supply every thing that was not in Man's Power, upon Condition of his diligently doing every thing on his part that was in his Power, from the first to the last Man of our Race; and successively thro' all his Generations, and in every Country under Heaven; which was the *Promise* of the *Mediator* in Paradise, in the *Seed of the Woman*, as I observ'd before. And this *Means* was dispens'd to Mankind by the same Wisdom and Goodness in the Diversity of *one, two, and five* usufructuary Talents; as it was more obscurely, or less clearly, or, at length, reveal'd to perfect Light; whilst every Man had *equally* committed to him the *one using* Talent, of *diligently seeking God as he is*, and *diligently seeking to please him as a Rewarder*, committed to him.

WITH respect to those who had the *one* Talent of *Means*, I took notice before * how that universal Principle of Reason, and Creed of Natural Religion, *That God is a Rewarder of those who diligently seek to please him*, flow'd from that original *Promise* of a *Mediator* to *Adam*. There needed but one Person, *Methuselah*, to convey it safe to *Noah*, for he convers'd with both of them. *Enoch*, and doubtless others in the old World walk'd with God and pleas'd him in virtue of that Faith; and *Sacrifice* was unquestionably intimated and *instituted* from Heaven, from the very first, as observ'd before, to conserve that *Hope* and *Belief*, and preserve the Memorial of that *Means* of *pleasing God* without which Faith, of God being a *Rewarder*, in vir-

* Vol. I.

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tue of that Means, or Medium, it was *impossible* either in the old World, or the new, implicitly or explicitly, *to please him*. From *Noah*, who is called the *Heir of the Righteousness of Faith* of the old World, the *Promise* with the *Sacrifice* flow'd down in two Channels, one, in a direct Line to *Abraham*, and so to the House and Lineage of *David*; to *Abraham* the *Promise* was renew'd of blessing all Nations and Kindreds of the World in *his Seed*, that should be born of the *Virgin Mary*. In the other, *Promise* and *Sacrifice* went out in a winding Channel, to water the rest of the Earth more sparingly, and with Interruptions from the Inhabiters of it, till the Time of refreshing should come from the Presence of the Revelation of the Lord.

THO' the *Promise* might be lost in a short Time, by the Unfaithfulness of *Oral Tradition*; yet the shedding of Blood in *Sacrifice*, and the Necessity of Atonement remain'd all the World over; and we find it in Fact, in the Discovery of every distant Territory of it, together with the Memory of the *Flood* convey'd down to all People; whose Reason could hardly fail of connecting the *Sins* of the *then* World and the *Anger* and *Hatred* of God, to *such* a Judgment, and likewise his monumental, distinguishing, *rewarding* Love of the *Righteous*, seeing almost all Mankind were drown'd, and but very few saved from perishing by Water. Yet the Religion and Devotion of *Sacrifice* carried with it, in the very Face of the Thing, a Proof and a Testimonial to every one's Reason, that God was *reconcilable* to Sinners; and therefore a *Rewarder* of those

CHAP. XIX. *those who diligently seek to please him, and consequently a Punisher of those who do not.**

THIS being so natural, so easy, and so universal a Principle of Reasoning to all Mankind, carrying with it a Divine Authority as a Principle of Faith and Religion, to all those who would do their Duty in using their Reason, in seeking God as he is, and please him in Hope of his rewarding Favour. And those Gentiles who govern their Actions by that Principle of Faith, are not so much as one Remove from *Abraham*. Having Faith in a future Country and better City, they have the Similitude of Children in that wherein *Abraham* was Father of the Faithful, and compleatly and emphatically Father of many Nations, they inherit that Country and City with him; and share the Blessing of *Moses's* Faith, who likewise had Respect unto the *Recompence of Reward*; all the Just upon Earth lived by that Faith, steer'd by that Compass, and became faithful and justifiable before God from their Fidelity, to that Expectation. The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen thro' Faith, preach'd the Gospel [the Promise, the same Gospel, the same Promise to fallen Adam, which preserv'd the first form'd Father of the World, and brought him out of his Fall, *Wisd. x. 1.*] unto *Abraham*, In thee shall all Nations be blessed, *Gal. iii. 8.* Tho' they lost the Promise, yet it was included in that true religious Principle of God's being a Rewarder; and tho' Men want to be put in mind of their Promise,

* *Sacrificant, adolent, libant, orantq; voventq; Mortales superis, si quid peccavit inique Quisquam, ut placati pœnas iramque remittant.*

yet

yet God does not, to give the Effect of it impartially to all his diligent, sincere Servants. Inasmuch as the Mediator tasted Death for all Men, and gave his Life a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time. And this makes good the Apostle's Argument, why God would have all Men to be saved, and to come to the Knowledge of the Truth, upon the Proof that follows, For there is one God (of the Gentiles as well as the Jews, the common Father of all Men) and one Mediator betwixt God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus*; the Mediator, as Man, took human Nature in general upon him, which shews the great Beauty of his own Expression, *Whoever shall do the Will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my Brother, and Sister, and Mother*; the Gentiles being related to him as well as the Jews, and equally ordain'd to trust in his Name; that all the Descendants of Adam might be equally his Brethren in the Flesh and Blood he partook of. He would have all Men, by their common Reasoning upon his Goodness, at all Times, and in all Places, to come to the Knowledge of that Truth, that he is a Rewarder of those who diligently seek to please him: That includes and secures the rest; till in his own due Time he shall testify the Mediator more openly and explicitly to all Nations.

AND therefore the same Apostle tells the Romans, that Word, or Righteousness of Faith, which he preached, was in their Heart †, as well as the Righteousness of Works, of the moral Law, which he contended also for, and proved to be written there.

* 1 Tim. ii. 4, &c.

† Rom. x. 8.

CHRIST

CHRIST is said by his Spirit to have preached to the Disobedient in the Days of Noah, who had imprison'd and inclos'd themselves in Wickedness, from all Reach and Effect of Preaching; and concerning him the Prophets searched and enquired diligently, what things the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify. And the Strivings of the Spirit in all Men is the Striving of the Spirit of Christ unreveal'd to them, but yet subsisting in virtue of the Promise. Repentance from dead Works, and Faith towards God, the same Apostle, Heb. vi. 1, 2. supposes to be the Foundation of all Religion; which is unfolded in the Summary he gives in to the Elders of Ephesus, of his Preaching the Religion of Christ, Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, Acts xx. 20. Repentance towards God—because, that respects the Religion of the End, which was grossly and universally deviated from, and wanted to be amended; then follows the only true Means and Direction for accomplishing that noble End to the best of human Power, divinely comforted and supported—Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.

FOR, that God is no Respector of Persons, or, in other Words, a Rewarder of his true conscientious Worshippers, is the Expectation and Voice of Nature, and wrote as it were upon the Heart of every Man, who duly exerts his Reason and does his best to serve and please him; and shall meet Encouragement and receive the Benefits of the Mediator, tho' unknown to them; is it not well known to us that he is an Advocate not only for OUR Sins, but for the Sins of the WHOLE World?

HAS

HAS not God given the Light of Reason, and in a manner enlighten'd every Man that cometh into the World, religiously using that Faculty, with Faith in himself, that he is, and is a Rewarder, &c.?

SENECA Ep. 95. comes very nigh this, if we might interpret Bonitas of Rewarding Goodness, *Primus est Deorum cultus, Deos credere, deinde reddere illis Majestatem suam, reddere Bonitatem, sine qua nulla est Majestas.* "A Man enlighten'd with Philosophy, says Socrates, ought to die with Courage and a firm Hope, that in the other World he shall enjoy a Felicity beyond any thing in this." "The Soul repairs to a Being like itself, a Being that is Divine, Immortal, and full of Wisdom, in which it enjoys an unexpressible Felicity, as being forced from its Errors, its Ignorance, its Fears, its Amours that tyranniz'd over it, and all other Evils retaining to human Nature. That Souls purg'd with Philosophy are receiv'd into yet more admirable and delicious Mansions, which I cannot easily describe; and concludes, What I told you, is sufficient to shew, that we ought to labour all our life time to purchase Virtue and Wisdom, *since we have so great a Hope and so great a Reward.*"* And with respect to Promise, there is a very remarkable Passage in the same Dialogue; "If both Ways [of learning Truth from others, or finding it ourselves,] fail us, amidst all human Reasons, we must pitch upon the strongest

* Plato's Phædon, or Immortality of the Soul. Of the Pagan Notion of Rewards and Punishments, *Vid. Alnet. Quæst. Lib. II. c. 24.*

" and

CHAP. "and most forcible, and trust to that as to a
XIX. "Ship, while we pass thro' this stormy Sea, and
"endeavour to avoid its Tempests and Shelves;
"till we find out one more sure and firm, *such*
"as a *Promise or Revelation*, upon which we may
"happily accomplish the Voyage of this Life,
"as in a Vessel that fears no Danger."

THERE is the *Truth* of the Godhead to be learnt from his Works; there is the Relation they stand in, and the *Obligation* of Duty to be gather'd and bosom'd up from the Respects and Circumstances, expectant of a future Account; they are placed in to God, their Neighbour, and themselves; there is the long-suffering continual Goodness of Divine Providence in the Distribution of fruitful Seasons, filling their Heart with Food and Gladness,—— a Gladness, from which they might plainly reason out an encouraging Prospect of securing his Favour for the better Things of a Life hereafter, in some after Provision for the better and more durable Part of Man.

WHAT tho' the Reason of the Men of their Country and Nations round about was disused, or abused by hereditary national Idolatry, Superstition, and gross Immoralities, still there was *personal* Consideration and *Fidelity* of Reason left (and *he that is faithful in a little, is faithful also in much*) to have made it equal to *M. Antonius*, *Socrates*, and *Epietetus*, one in the highest, the other in the middle Station of Life,* the third a poor Slave. Tho' they knew not the particular Way and Method of reconciling the

* Being once in the Senate of Athens, according to *Xenophon*.
pardoning

CHAP. pardoning Mercy with the punishing Justice of
XIX. God, they might be so sure in general from the
Goodness of God, that there was some *Medium*
for that; so as to keep any Innovator from the
first beginning, and thro' all Series of Time,
from the Presumption of *inventing*, *appointing*
and *multiplying* Mediators, the irrational Source of
all Superstition and Idolatry.

IF God is a *Rewarder*, (the greater always including the less,) that implies and infers, that he is a *Pardoner*, that he is disposed to be an *Encourager*, that there is an *Assister*; that there is most likely a gratuitous *Intercessor* and well appointed *Mediator*; and, according to the Expectation and Philosophick Prayer of *Socrates*, that he will in due time become an *Instructor*. Now this may lead to *Repentance towards God*, because it is, in effect, *Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ*, with a becoming Submission, and in a *rational* Kind of *Expectation*; which is in part acknowledging Christ, and so far *Justin Martyr* acknowledges *Socrates* a *Christian*. And there is intimation of many such, of whom it is said, *they have seen no Prophets, yet they shall call their Sins to remembrance, and acknowledge them*, 2 *Esdr.* i. 36.

BUT the *modern* Deist insolently and most ungratefully spurns at the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, knowing what it is, and what are its peculiar Contents; he repents him of that Faith, which effectually prepares and paves the Way to Repentance towards God for their guilty Mischief in the Religion of Nature; and therefore *his* Repentance is to be repented of, or else he must never pretend to any *Acceptance*, to any
Repentance,

CHAP. Repentance, or to any Prayer, of his own head:
XIX. strong devising, or his own wilful Method, and
Manner unsubmitive.

THEY might clearly argue, that the *invisible Godhead*, an all-present, and all-seeing *Spirit*, could never be like the Representations that the Devices of Men, foolish in Wisdom, and vain in their Imaginations, could impart to Silver or Gold, or other Materials; that it must be very absurd and preposterous to confine and confound such a Being with such Stuff, or the Cogitations of him with such Nonsense, which served only to vilify him with Contradictions instead of glorifying him as God. Bind the Sacrifice with Cords, but let it be offer'd only to the God of Heaven, without mixing any Idolatrous Manner, or *Idol-Mediator* with it, as *Job*, that ancient *Arabian*, was free from; and as their History relates, was practised in *China* for many Ages, before Idolatry enter'd. And it is probable from *Plutarch*, * That upper *Egypt* was for a long time free from the vile Idolatry they were afterwards so infamous for; they professed to worship nothing but their God *Cneph*, whom they affirmed to be without Beginning and without End; and tho' they represented this Deity by a Figure of a Serpent with the Head of a Hawk, in the middle of a Circle, yet they affirm'd this God was the Creator of all Things, incorruptible and eternal.

"So far, says Sir *Isaac Newton*, as we can know by Natural Philosophy what is the first Cause, what Power he has over us, and

* *De Id. & Osir.* p. 359.

" what

CHAP. "what Benefits we receive from him, so far our
XIX. "Duty towards him, as well as that towards one
"another, will appear to us by the Light of
"Nature. And no doubt, if the Worship of
"false Gods had not blinded the Heathens,
"their moral Philosophy would have gone farther than to the four Cardinal Virtues; and
"instead of teaching the Transmigration of
"Souls, and to worship the Sun and Moon,
"and dead Heroes, they would have taught us
"to worship our true Author and Benefactor, as
"their Ancestors did under the Government of
"Noah and his Sons before they corrupted
"themselves." * But after the Corruption enter'd, then began the Blindness and Insufficiency of Reason in their best Philosophers; they were carried away with the Stream, and by a voluntary kind of Overbearance sided with it. Tho' they might know it was an Absurdity and Injustice to God the Creator, to worship the Creature *κατὰ τὴν κτίσαντα*, more than the Creator (as the Vulgar did and will do every where) or *besides*, or in *Conjunction* with him, as the Philosophers, with the *Papish* Writers might think of screening themselves, with the vain Distinction of *Relative* Worship, wherein neither *Gentile*, *Jew*, nor *false* Christian, ever could, or ever can find the Benefit of an Excuse; seeing relative *Swearing* (a kind of Worship) by the Temple, &c. is condemn'd as indefensible.

It is very remarkable that the very learned *Huetius* †, among others, cites the *Chinese*; and shews that the *old Romans* for the first 170 Years,

* *Opticks*, p. 382.

† *Alnet. Quæst. Lib. III. c. 6. de cultu Idolorum.*

CHAP. XIX. were without Images in their Worship, in order to prove it the universal Practice of the first Ages after the Flood to worship God without them. Which brings an Argument home to their own Door, that he did not think of, *viz.* That in Case the Scripture had not condemn'd the idolatrous Manner of worshipping by Images, the uncorrupt State of Nature supplies an Argument against it.

THE Children of God therefore over the Face of the Earth having receiv'd their Original Portion, and *common Grace* to have secur'd his Favour; if, in lieu of using the *one Talent* committed to them, they go and bury it in the Earth slothfully and criminally; *for he that is unfaithful in a little, will be unfaithful also in much*; and, whilst they pretend to know God, glorify him not as God, but hold the Truth in unrighteous Idolatry; having no Sense of Gratitude or common *Thankfulness* for the Favours and Blessings they daily received from the Hand of his Providence, as the Apostle accuses them: If the Seed of Reason in their Heart, in Fact, neither produc'd God, nor Virtue; but *Dæmons, Images, Chimeras* of all sorts were set up there, as well as in their Temples, as Objects of Worship; and Immoralities and Vices of all Kinds was the Devotion and Religion there; which transform'd them into the Children of the *Devil*, Votaries to him and all his Wickednesses: Is it not just and righteous, at the last Day, that Judgment with Vengeance should take place upon those who thus *know not God*, as well as upon them *who obey not, or believe not*, (when they may do both) *the Gospel of Christ*?

THO' they will not be brought to Account for the two Talents, nor yet for the Five; yet they must, and ought to give up an Account of the *one Talent*, how they put it to use; and let them who thus abused it answer as they will, they will be condemn'd out of their own Mouth.

AND if this religious, Reasoning Use of their Talent was, and is in the Power of the Heathen World to have traffick'd withal, at least to have exerted some Industry and Diligence towards pleasing God, who made them to that End of their Being, as the only Way to their Happiness; if Reason was purposely given them to endeavour to extricate themselves out of those unhappy Circumstances what they can, and it was their Duty to God, and themselves, to do their utmost; especially since our Author tells them, "God's Will is so clearly and fully manifested in the Book of Nature, that he who runs may read it."* How then can it be a *Crime* in these Heathens personally to endeavour to relieve themselves in their deplorable State, as he calls it? Was ever such a Contradiction as this is, to Reason, common Sense, and to himself, ever before offer'd by any Master-Author to his Disciples? When they know it to be one of the declar'd Purposes of his Book, to set up the *Sufficiency* of Human Reason independent of Revelation, as perfect and compleat, in all Parts of the World, to answer up to the *five Talents*, and do every thing explicitly that the Gospel of *Christ* can direct, towards pleasing God.

* *Christianity as old*, p. 23, 24.

THE Prayer of *Simplicius* at the Conclusion of his Comments on *Epiſt.* ſpeaks with more Modeſty, and breathes Sentiments the reverſe to theſe prophane Writers: “ Grant, I beſeech thee, O Lord, the Giver and Guide of all “ Reaſon, that we may be always mindful of “ the Dignity, of the Nature, and the Privileges thou haſt honour’d us withal; that we “ may act in all things as becomes free Agents “ to the ſubduing and governing our Paſſions, “ to the refining them from Fleſh and Senſe, “ and to the rendring them ſubſervient to excellent Purpoſes. Grant us alſo thy favourable “ Aſſiſtance to the reforming and directing our “ Judgment; and enlighten us with thy Truth, “ that we may diſcern thoſe Things that are really “ Good, and having diſcover’d them, may “ love and cleave ſtedfaſtly to the ſame. And, “ finally, diſperſe; we pray thee, thoſe Miſts “ which darken the Eyes of our Mind, that ſo “ we may have a perfect Underſtanding, and “ know both God and Man.” Would any ſuch Perſons reject, would they not greatly rejoice at a Saviour, and a Revelation from God? Tho’ it is *impoſſible* for any Man, in any part of the World, to come to God as his Servant, or *pleaſe him* as his Worſhipper, without believing him a *Rewarder* of thoſe that ſeek and give their Diligence to pleaſe him; which is, as I have often ſhewn, an *implicit* Faith in *Chriſt*, the Mediator of the New Teſtament, the everlaſting Covenant, which gave, and gives the diſtinguiſhing Excellency and Virtue to his ſaving Goſpel, or the true Means of pleaſing God, from the beginning of the World, to the final End thereof.

IT is true, the Author of *Wiſdom* has well obſerv’d, ſpeaking of the Degeneracy of theſe *Gentiles*, *As for the Myſteries of God* [the original *Promiſe*] *they knew them not; neither hoped they for the Wages of Righteouſneſs, nor diſcern’d a Reward for blameleſs Souls **, meaning an eternal Reward agreeable to the Immortality of the Soul, as it follows. Yet the Deſire of that Happineſs, ſurely, could never be implanted in Man in vain; and to what other Purpoſe, comparatively, could Reaſon be given but to endeavour for this Happineſs, by ſecuring the Favour of God in the beſt manner they could? If God does not require of any Man what is explicitly impoſſible for him to do in order to attain it; it follows, that the *uſing* Talent of Reaſon put into their Power and Truſt was, and is ſufficient on their Part, exercis’d as it ought, to attain that Degree of Happineſs apportion’d to their *one* Talent, which, according as it is uſed, exceeds in the Proportion of *ten* to *one*, (conſidering the Difficulties they lie under; or as it is expreſs’d in *Luke xix. 17.* *Because thou haſt been faithful IN A VERY LITTLE, have thou Authority over ten Cities; the Mina, Pound, in proportion to five Talents is very little indeed*) in the State allotted to them; as the Proportion allotted to Chriſtians ſeems to exceed in Degree of Happineſs, as *five* improved to *five*, to *one* improved to *one* in the different Uſe of their Talents. And the Kind of Happineſs may differ as the Government over *ten, five, &c. Cities*, from the JOY OF THE LORD; where in there is a *Prophet*, and a *righteous Man’s* Re-

* Chap. ii. 22.

CHAP. ward, and the *Shining of those like Stars, who convert others*; and one Star *differing from another in Glory*. The *whole* of future Happiness being the free Gift of God, and no Claim of Debt or Merit for our best Behaviour, God is not oblig'd to distribute it by the Measures of *Equality*, but from his Grace and Favour by the Measures of *Equity*, bearing *Proportion* or Analogy to our Behaviour, in the Difference and Degrees of one Star out-shining another in Glory. That Position therefore of our Author so often repeated, that the End of God's creating Man, was to give and confer on him *all the Happiness his Nature is capable of**, must be fundamentally false; and is such a levelling Principle, as destroys both the Wisdom, and Goodness of God, and all the Varieties of his Favour. The very Nature and Freedom of the Goodness of the wisest Being is establish'd in the various Instances and *Degrees* of communicating itself, and consequently in the *various Time* of doing it. I say, to recover that Primæval, Fundamental Truth, that God is a *Rewarder*, &c. and therefore a Pardoner of Sin and Infirmary, is sufficient in their confus'd Knowledge, to comfort them in their virtuous Endeavours, that God is no *Respecter of Persons*, nor anywise austere or unkind to any that are diligent in the Pursuit of his Favour, and their own Happiness. God is a *Rewarder* of all who attentively seek him, whilst he is himself a *Reward* to some who prove Heroick in their Faith in him. In a State where all is *intellectual Pleasure*, to see him as he is, to know even as we are known, is the most felicitating Reward. New Perfections (for with respect

* Page 370.

to number they are infinite) will be continually CHAP. discovering themselves in God, and that will be XIX. the never-ceasing Food of eternal Love and Fruition; Light is the first and fairest of sensible Entertainments, but in his Light who is the *Father of Lights*, we shall continually see Light, and in the increase of that, new and various Things continually.

YET I chuse rather to apply, in this Case, the Distinction of a very ingenious Writer*, between a *remote*, and a *proximate* Sufficiency; and adopt the former as weaker in Efficacy and Practice, and more suitable to the State of the Degeneracy: And I beg leave of him, whoever he is, to cite the following Passage. "Now I look upon the Bulk of the *Heathen World* in such kind of Circumstances as these. Reason, so far as it relates to God and Religion, and eternal Happiness, seems to be asleep in them; some happy Hints may possibly awaken it, and set it a moving in a right Channel, tho' without Revelation it will ever be ready to wander, and go astray. Reason in far the greatest Part of them, seems to be intoxicated and drawn away into endless Fooleries, instead of Religion, led astray by wild Appetite and Passion, perverted by a thousand Prejudices, and by the universal Customs of the Country, and seduced far from all the Paths of Truth and Duty. Now if any Occurrence arise which may bring them to a Stand, free from the intoxicating Influences of Prejudice, Custom, Passion, &c. 'tis possible, in the Nature of Things, that

* *Strength and Weakness of Human Reason*, pag. 103.

CHAP. XIX. "the Powers of Reason may then trace out
 "such a Religion, which, if sincerely practised,
 "may lead them to final Happiness †."

3. THIS Mediator, who gave himself a Ransom for all, is to be testified in due Time. As it pleased the manifold Wisdom of God, by various Steps and Degrees, to carry on the Design of fulfilling the Promise for the Space of about 4000 Years after it was first made upon the first Entrance of Sin into the World; what can so much previous Solemnity, for so long a Time, intend to teach us, but that this great Mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the Flesh, was the Master-piece of Divine Counsel and Wisdom, and that all the lesser Dispensations of Providence are subservient to, and accomplish'd by it?

D. R. Clarke's Observation upon *Is.* xi. 4, &c. and *Revel.* xiv. 6. xi. 15. is worthy of Notice: *I saw an Angel having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the Earth, and to every Nation and Kindred, and Tongue and People — And there were great Voices in Heaven, saying; The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.* "Whether these
 "and the like Prophecies shall yet finally have
 "a literal Accomplishment, by an universal
 "Prevalency of the Gospel of Peace on Earth;
 "or whether they shall have their full and literal Completion, only in that new Heaven and
 "new Earth wherein Righteousness is to dwell for
 "ever; is still a Secret in the Breast of Providence, which we ought not to be over confident,

* Page 102.

"dent

"dent in explaining *." I need not repeat what was observ'd before of the Fulness and Fitness of the Time of his Manifestation; but proceed to shew the Fallhood of our Author's Assertion, that the Gospel was publish'd but to a small Part of Mankind.

FOR, is it not well known, that in the Space of 300 Years it spread all over the Roman Empire; and beyond its Limits, as far Eastward as Malabar, by the Preaching of St. Thomas? That Empire was then so general, as to be call'd the World, *οικουμένη*. It was, without doubt, the most civiliz'd Part of the Terraqueous Globe, the most susceptible and fittest to receive the Gospel. After Kings and Magistrates embraced it, Miracles, which were to carry the Work up Hill, were withdrawn; and the Propagation of it afterwards committed to human Care and Means; and that is one of the standing Reasons assign'd, why it is good and acceptable in the Sight of God our Saviour, to pray for KINGS and ALL that are in Authority, because, as it follows, he would have ALL MEN to be saved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth. When the Civil Power ceases to oppose, the Arguments and Objections of its other Adversaries make it only the more glorious to all the unprejudic'd World. And in this, do not all the Kings of the Earth execute the Commands of God, without either being of his Council, or in his Confidence?

THE Gospel of Christ, being a Religion perfectly fitted and design'd for all Mankind, has

* *Posthum. Sermon. V. III. pag. 294. 5.*

therefore

CHAP. therefore made Provision, by its Precepts and
XIX. Commands to teach and make Disciples, for a
successive and perpetual Promulgation, till all
Nations and People come explicitly to the Know-
ledge of the Truth: Whereas the *Jewish* Reli-
gion, being in its Nature temporary, and local
to a District, has no *Precept* for making Prose-
lytes. And what human Means can be judg'd
more likely either to extend it widely, or trans-
mit it safely to the latest Posterity, than the
Sway of *Princes*, the Trafficking Opportunities
of *Merchants* who search all Corners of the
Earth for Gain, and the tender Care which Na-
ture has planted in *Parents* for communicating
successively to their Off-spring such an important
Treasure, pure and uncorrupt?

No Fault therefore in the Gospel, if it has
not shed its benign Influences much farther. But
great and lamentable Fault there has been in
many of its Professors in the *East*; who by their
fierce and bloody Disputes, join'd to wicked
Lives, in the *Nestorian* Controversy, weaken'd
the Cause of Christianity, then, and there, in
the most flourishing State, to that Degree, that
it fell an easy Prey (the Judgment of God assist-
ing its own Threats of taking away their *Candle-
stick*) to the ambitious worldly Spirit of *Mahomet*
and his Religion; to the losing more Ground
in *Asia*, *Africa*, and part of *Europe*, than it now
possesses elsewhere. And such a vast Territory,
and so many Millions of Souls, now lie waste of
a *Mediator* between God and Man, partly owing
to the Folly and worldly Spirit of the Eastern
Christians, "drawing the abstrusest Niceties
into Controversy, which were of little or no
Moment

"Moment to that which is the chief End of our
"holy Christian Religion *." CHAP.
XIX.

SOME Commentators on the *Revelations* ap-
ply *Abaddon*, *Apollyon*, to *Mahomet* and his Suc-
cessors †. And I would observe, that in destroy-
ing Idolatry in *Arabia*, they ran into the other
Extreme of *destroying*, (that being the Meaning
of *Apollyon*) the very Notion of a *Mediator* be-
tween God and Man, that Foundation Principle
of true Religion, Root and Branch. They don't
substitute *Mahomet* in that Office of *Christ* of
being a *perpetual Mediator and Intercessor*; they
even *intercede* and *pray* for their PROPHET
in their *Liturgy* ||. The *Alcoran* seems to have
transcribed the glaring *Pharisaical* Part of *Ju-
daism* into their Religion, a great Zeal for *Fast-
ing* and giving *Alms*, and many *Prayers* to be
seen of Men as an *opus operatum*, and likewise
great Precaution against some *outward* Pollu-
tions, whilst *Lust* the Head of the concupisci-
ble, and *Wrath* and *Cruelty* the Head of the
irascible Passions, are both indulg'd to the Full;
without any Provision for *inward* Religion,
guarding the Thoughts and Heart, where the
Fountain of Religion is to be sought and secured.
But in throwing out all use of a *Mediator*, for
Access to, and Acceptance with God in their
Repentance, Prayers, and sincere Endeavours to
serve him, they manifest their Ignorance and In-
consideration of the *true Nature* of God, and
Man, which the Voice of Nature proclaims
over the *Pagan* World (in their Application to

* See *Prid. Life of Mahom. Pref. pag. 7.* and *Reland's*
Treatise of the Mahometans, pag. 165. † See *Mr. Pyle*
on *Rev. ix. 11.* || *Reland, pag. 117.*

CHAP.
XIX.

Idols, as before observ'd) viz. his essential Holiness and Purity, and Man's Sinfulness and Guilt; which lays the Foundation of the Gospel in the Heart of Man, and supposes some *one true* Mediator of Worship, *Christ* reveal'd, and to be reveal'd.

AND therefore as they oppose him in that saving Office, in a great Measure knowing him to be appointed of God to that Office, and confessing him to be the *Messiah*; they may be justly call'd the *Eastern Branch of Anti-Christ*; as *Popery* corrupting and idolatrously invalidating that Office by the Worship of Saints and Angels, may be stiled its *Western Branch*. So the judicious Dr. *Prideaux* has observ'd, "That *Mahomet* began his Imposture about the same Time "that the *Bishop of Rome*, by virtue of a Grant " (A. D. 606.) from the wicked Tyrant *Phocas*, " first assum'd the Title of *universal Pastor*, and " thereon claim'd to himself that *Supremacy* " which he hath been ever since endeavouring " to usurp over the *Church of Christ*. And from " this time both having conspired to found " themselves an *Empire in Imposture*, their Followers have been ever since endeavouring by " the same Methods, that is, of Fire and Sword, " to propagate it among Mankind; so that " *Anti-Christ* seems at this time to set both his " Feet upon *Christendom* together, the one in " the *East*, and the other in the *West* *." And I would add, that as *Christianity* is universally acknowledged by the *Mahometans* to be the *next best* Religion to their own, and they speak many honourable things of *Christ*, representing *Mahomet*

* Life of *Mahom.* pag. 16.

met in his Journey to Heaven applying to the Intercession of *Jesus*, and begging his Prayers for himself, upon any great Alteration (suppose from the *Russian Power*, the Patron of the subdued, once flourishing *Greek Church* there) there seems to be a providential *Back-door* open for Christianity to come in, and recover its place. And when it pleases God to put it into the Hearts of *Popish Princes* to do Justice in restoring the *Key* of Knowledge taken away from them, and their People, by Usurpers of their Rights, (grievous Wolves turning all Religion both the Power and Form of it, into Prince and People's Ignorance and their own filthy Lucre, lordly, but detestable Ambition) pure Religion will enter their Territories, at the *Fore-door*, and the Kingdoms of the Earth will become as well the real, as the profess'd Kingdom of our *Lord Jesus Christ*.

GOD having provided sufficient Laws and Remedies in his universal Kingdom of Reason and Righteousness, against Sin and Wickedness, and all moral Evil, if Men in the Liberty of their Will and their common Understanding (the chief *Subjects* of the Kingdom) will be so perverse and obstinate, as to join Hand in Hand and bring in moral Evil like a Flood; he is not oblig'd to step out of the Way of his Providence in governing moral Agents, to put a stop to it, but let it have its Course upon Childrens Children. Yet so wicked and abominable is our Author, as to accuse his Providence as being the Author of it; for is he "who does not hinder " a Mischief when it is in his Power, thought " much better than he who does it *?" Can

* Page 352.

CHAP. XIX. there be a greater Villany imputed to the Governor of the World, excepting that of inditing his Book? It is the same thing, as arraigning him of robbing upon the Highway, and breaking open People's Houses, because he does not interpose to stop and hinder Men in those Mischiefs, or chain up the Devil from tempting them.

"WHAT human Legislator, says he, if he found a Defect in his Laws, and thought it for the Good of his Subjects to add new Laws, would not promulgate them to all his People *." To which I answer with respect to the heavenly Legislator; he found no Defect in his original Laws; they, being founded in the Nature and Constitution of Things, were very good, as were the Things he made. The Defect sprung up in Man, subject to them, by yielding to Sin and the Tempter; which in a rational Creature is as much a vain Opposition and self-confounding Contradiction to Reason and to that Creature's Dependence upon God, as to the Nature and Constitution of Things; but when perfect Obedience could no longer be observ'd, in great Mercy and Condescension a *New Covenant* was struck in the *Mediator*, for rendring sincere Obedience not only acceptable, but rewardable with an higher Gift of Happiness and eternal Life than ever was before.

NOT that the *Mediator* added any thing new to the original Law, (that eternal Religion of the End, to last and be observ'd in the next future World, as well as in this) which was not

* Page 362.

really

CHAP. XIX. really included in it before, tho' the Degeneracy of Man could not so well discern it; but became the *Head* of the Religion of the Means for Mens performing, in this World, that Religion of the End unto God. And till this new Religion or Law of the Means was actually promulgated to all the Subjects; all, before his coming into the World, and afterwards, every where, shall be intitled to a Benefit from it, using their Reason and Diligence in obeying the former Law, to the best of their Power, coming to God, in that Faith of Nature, believing *that he is, and is a Rewarder of those that diligently seek to please him.* To be a Punisher of Transgression secures the Observance of a Law between a Superior and Inferior; but to be a *Rewarder* of Man's Obedience, which is not due by natural Right, very plainly supposes something more and better than a *natural* Right; implies a *Covenant* or *Promise* of giving what Man could have no Right of claiming, but in virtue of that Promise.

THIS short Faith, *Catholick* to Mankind, and plain to every Man's Reason, who would do the Will of God, upon the least Reflection, as it is the true Spirit that enlivens good Works and turns Morality into Religion, by comprizing under it the Idea of a *Rewarder*, the Goodness, Righteousness and Justice of God, the Springs and Powers by which he governs and judges the moral World: This Faith, I say, being religiously observ'd, would have prevented Superstition and Idolatry all the World over; those Innovations and Inventions of *Men* (than which no Invention is more fruitful) for diligently seeking to avail themselves, and please God most

most preposterously, with Service, and by Devotion the reverse of the other, a Contradiction to *his* Nature, and *their own*; compromising their Fears, and compounding their Sins upon the Merits of Ceremonies and Observances foreign to the Repentance of forsaking of them, and disregardful to God's Goodness, and gracious Designs of rewarding them hereafter for faithful Duty. 'Till by degrees the World grew so witty and wise at these Fooleries, that at length by their Wisdom of Imagination, they knew not God; *neither by considering the Works did they acknowledge the Work-Master; tho' by the Greatness and Beauty of the Creatures the Maker of them is proportionably seen.* And, in that Disposition, was the more averse to mind, or prone to forget what he should say to them, in any true Revelation of his Will from Heaven. I shall once more present the Reader with the Words of the aforesaid very ingenious Author.

"THE King doth not think himself obliged every Year, or every Age, to give the rising Generation a new and immediate promulgation of his general Laws, nor of his Act of Grace, nor to repeat to them over again the Testimony and Proofs of its Royalty and Authority. Yet the Children being Rebels still, may still be continued in their Banishment, for their own and their Parents Rebellion, if they do not comply with the appointed Method in the Act of Grace which was publish'd in their Great Grandfathers Days. Is it not a common Case among Mankind, that when any King makes a *Law with a Penalty*, and publishes it once thro' his whole Nation, he doth not think himself bound to publish this a-new,

" as

" as often as new Subjects are born in his Dominion? And yet not only all the present Subjects, but their Posterity also, who break this Law, are in the common Sense of Mankind, liable to the Penalty, because 'tis supposed, that Nature obliges Men to communicate such necessary Knowledge to their Offspring. Much less would any King, who freely publish'd an Act of Grace to Rebels, think himself oblig'd in Justice to repeat the Publication of this Act to every new Generation of Rebels who should rise, and continue in the known and wilful Rebellion of their Fathers; for since he was not obliged to make any such Act of Grace at first, he can never be obliged to repeat the Proclamation of it."

" — The rebellious Children of these rebel Subjects may complain indeed, that they were never told, nor did they know the general Laws of the Kingdom, nor were they acquainted with the particular Acts of Grace, and these special appointed Methods of obtaining Pardon and Favour. But if the general Laws of the Kingdom were so far agreeable to the Laws of Reason and Nature, that if they would but seriously consider with themselves, and set their Reason at work in good earnest, they might find out not only these *general Laws*, but so much also of the *particular Methods of Grace*, as to get some Hope of Pardon and Acceptance, if they sincerely practis'd them; then, I say, these Children are highly criminal for not applying their rational Powers to the Work, and for not seeking out and practising all that was within the Verge and Compass of their natural Powers, in order to be restored to the

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CHAP. "Favour of the King. And such criminal
XIX. "Creatures justly continue under the Displeasure
of their Sovereign."*

4. WE find in the first History of the Propagation of the Gospel, the *Spirit extraordinarily* forbidding the *Apostles* to preach to some Nations, at the Season they intended to do it; and *extraordinarily* beckoning them to others, particularly *Macedonia*.† Which implies that some Times are more critical and seasonable for that Work than others, and that the Dispositions of some People are riper and fitter to receive such an holy Doctrine than others: As if some had improv'd the one Talent committed to them, so as to deserve to have more entrusted with them; for *be that is faithful in a little, is faithful also in much*; and others had taken little or no Care of the Matter. Now that favourable Time, and those Dispositions are known only unto God. St. *Cbrysest*. ‡ explains *due Time*, by *pertinent, suitable*. Clem. Alex. when Men are *studiously disposed* to the Faith. Cornelius, a Roman Officer, the first *Gentile* Convert, being extraordinary well disposed, and being in the Neighbourhood of the Gospel, was extraordinarily directed by an *Angel* to send for *Peter* to learn it of him. The supine Neglect of others seems to have been the Case of Heathen *Asia* and *Africa*, and some Parts of *Europe*. As to the *West-Indies*, that must, without a Miracle, have been out of the Case of being converted

* *Strength and Weakness of Human Reason*, p. 248, 250.

† *Act* xvi. 6, &c.

‡ *Kαὶ ἐπεὶ ἰδὼν, τὴν ἐν τῷ πνεύματι—ὅτι ἐκείνους εἶχεν πρὸς τὴν πίστιν οἱ ἀνδρα- γοῖ.* Apud Mill. *Test*.

for

for many Generations, till it was discover'd, and CHAP.
recover'd again to the Communication of this XIX.
Part of the World.

THE *Chinese*, who reckon themselves the wisest People in the World, as if they had received the *Ten Pounds* and all the rest of the World but *One Pound* of that Talent, *Reason*, despising others as Fools to them, put their Reason to no other use, in religious Matters (the principal Object of human Understanding) but to strive to out-do one another in multiplying new Idols of Worship; * and sometimes disgracing old ones upon an unsuccessful Suit to them. They are ingenious at *Civil Arts*, and *Laws*, but blind and infatuated in burying *Religion* under Heaps of Rubbish and Loads of Superstition. So degenerate is the Wisdom of this World when unassisted by Revelation of the Wisdom from above! The *Candle of the Lord* (their Reason) which should light them to the Lord of Heaven and Earth, they have put under a Bushel, and keep it there, without desiring the Gospel for a *Candlestick*. The *Jesuits* may probably have made some sincere Converts to *Mathematicks*, but few, 'tis fear'd, to Christianity; to be sure, not one to the true Religion of *Jesus*. And in *Japan*, the *Missioners* managed so badly, by carrying the Spirit of the World with them (as that sort generally do) to propagate a Religion not of this World; that they gave Occasion to the shutting the Door against it, and its very Name, and brought on

* Most Learned, and most Idolatrous and Superstitious are very compatible in a Heathen Country, Witness *Athens* and *Egypt*. And now in *China* there is as great a Mob of Gods to be seen.

a perpetual Banishment, by the severest Laws the Wit of Man can invent *. They may, 'tis true, find the less Difficulty in making Converts in some idolatrous Nations, because there is so great Affinity between the Idolatry and Superstition of the Converter and the Converted; but how great will be the Difficulty of those who come after, who may be willing to undeceive them, what true Christianity is?

OTHER Heathens are so far sunk and lost in the slothful Disuse of their one Talent, that they seem to require a long Preparation from fore-running Traffick and Commerce to humanize, and rationalize them, before the Pearls of Christianity, the greatest Jewel of Divine or Human Reason, can be received into their Esteem. Gentle Alterations and Comixtures of other Nations may talk and reason them into some Impressions of it, in Process of Time: But it is not for us to know the particular Times and Seasons when the Fulness of the Gentiles will come in, God has reserv'd them in his own Power. Elegant are the Observations of the Son of Syrach; *All the Works of the Lord are exceeding good, and whatsoever he commandeth, shall be accomplish'd in due Season.—And none may say, What is this? Wherefore is that? for at a time convenient, they shall all be sought out.†—As his ways are plain to the Holy, so they are a stumbling Block unto the Wicked.‡ He shall give every needful Thing in due Season. So that a Man can't say, this is worse than that; for in time they shall be all well approv'd.¶ In much Knowledge*

* See Kempher's History.

† Eccles. xxxix. 16, 17.

‡ v. 14.

¶ v. 33, 34.

the Lord hath divided them, and made their Ways divers.—As the Clay is in the Potters Hand to fashion it at his Pleasure, so Man is in the Hand of him that made him, to render to them as liketh him best. * The Words of Esdras are considerable, He is patient, and long suffereth those that have sinned, as his Creatures.—And he pardoneth; for if he did not so of his Goodness, that they which have committed Iniquities, might be eased of them, the ten thousandth Part of Men should not remain living. And being Judge, if he should not forgive them that are cured with his Word, and put out the Multitude of Contentions [in the Margin Contempts] there should be very few left, peradventure in an innumerable Multitude, 2 Esd. vii. 64, &c.

HOWEVER this we all know, that God will judge the World with Righteousness, and the Nations with Equity; that he will be justified in his saying; and clear both when he judges, and when he is judged. Who shall accuse thee for the Nations that perish, whom thou hast made? or who shall come to stand against thee to be revenged for the unrighteous Men?—For as much as thou art righteous thyself, thou orderest all things righteously; thinking it not agreeable with thy Power, to condemn him that hath not deserv'd to be punish'd.† That to whom little is committed, of them much will not be required. That few Stripes will be the Portion of those who knew not their Lord's Will; few, in Comparison of those who know, who despise, who carelessly perform it. That they will be tried and acquitted according to what they have, and not according to what they had not. And

* Eccles. xxxiii. 11, 13.

† Wisd. xii. 12.

CHAP. so all Mouths will, then, be stopp'd with the
XIX. Plenitude of Wisdom, Justice, and Goodness
of the Divine Dispensations.

AND now we may even know, and be assur'd, that the Dispensing the different Talents, and affording different Degrees of Means unto Men, dispers'd over the Earth, is *according to the Counsel of his Will*, which is *unsearchable* by us, and *past finding out*, any farther, than to stop the Mouth of *Deists*, who are such importunate and presumptuous Objectors, and Intruders also to know the *whole Scheme, Order, or State of Things*, as well as God, or else allow no Wisdom in his Ways: tho', in the Nature of Things, it is impossible for them, or any Mortal, to have any other than broken Views; their great Grandfathers seeing one part of the Scene; themselves the middle Act, or some part of it; and their great Grandchildren the Conclusion.* It is therefore truly *sublime* (being exactly agreeable to the *Nature* of the Subject) for us to profess our Ignorance and Defect, when we speak of the Ways of Providence, or offer to assign *all particular* Reasons of his Conduct: and consequently to expect, or argue otherwise, must be Pedantry and Bombast.

BUT I hasten to give a more particular and PROPER Answer to *these* Objectors. Do our *Deists* ask Questions of those Things? I

* This must necessarily be so; because all Parts of the *Drama* of God, the *Oikonomia* of Providence can't be upon the Stage at once, this World can't contain them. Therefore some must go off, when it is the Time for others to come on.

shall

shall not answer by asking them Questions, but CHAP.
return *the fitting* Answer to them. XIX.

AND since this is a Difficulty of the *Deists* own starting, they ought to have the Edification of a *proper* Answer.

I. I observe to them that this Objection comes with a very ill Grace from these sort of Persons. They blame God for not communicating the Gospel to the Heathens, upon a Supposition, that he made every Man to partake of as much Happiness as his Nature is capable of. I grant the Supposition, that Christianity duly *known, profess'd, believ'd, and obey'd*, according to their own Stile, will make a Man as happy as his Nature is capable of. Is not this Happiness offer'd to, is it not at the same time slighted by *them* with particular Contumely? If the Heathens were to follow their Example, must they not do the same? Wherefore then do *they* accuse the Conduct of Providence for not proposing that, which they advise *them* to reject, or for not bringing that to Light, which they labour to bury in Darkness; extolling, as they do, Heathen Darkness, and preferring it in Word and Deed before the Light, knowingly, and professedly.

FOR so is the deplorable Matter of Fact, they hinder the Gospel of all the good Effect they can, at Home; and yet with ridiculous Peevishness, throw the blame upon God for not spreading it Abroad: And as fast as Providence favours the spreading the Gospel Abroad, in its Truth and Simplicity, they follow God as fast as ever they can, with their wicked disappointing,

CHAP. ing, self-accusing Opposition, to overthrow and
XIX. destroy it utterly.* So intent are they in *com-
passing Sea and Land to make one Profelyte!* so
confederate in the Wickedness of dispensing the
Opiate of Unbelief to all the World.

II. I OBSERVE that the Religion of Nature, which they pretend to recommend with so much Zeal at Home, and Abroad, in lieu of the Gospel, is bound upon the Obedience and Observance of the *Christian*, with far superior Force, accumulated Authority, and deeper and more insinuating Impression of superadded Mercies and Kindnesses, than Natural Religion can pretend to; and therefore, if they had any real Value, or the least Degree of sincere Friendship and Zeal for *that*, they ought to turn Christian for the sake thereof, and persuade every Body else to do so. Taking that Religion in the highest Sense they ever extend it to, as the *Law* and *Will* of God; still as that same Law and Will of God is in the Christian Revelation, *written*, collected together and perfected to the highest Pitch of human Reason (as *Deists* themselves acknowledge, and dishonestly borrow their best Things from it.) If this best End is strengthen'd and facilitated, 1. By the

* "There seems to be a form'd Design among *some* in *England*, to make us irrecoverably worse, both in Principles and Behaviour; at least several Books to that End have of late been scatter'd over all our Colonies; such as the *Rights of the Christian Church, and the Defence of it*; the *Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion*; the *Fable of the Bees*; *Lyon's Infallibility of Human Judgment*; many of the *Socinian Tracts*; *Woolston's Discourses*, &c. and other Performances of the same Tendency." See a Letter to the Bishop of London from an Inhabitant of the *Leeward Islands*, p. 17.

best

best MEANES, and greatest Mercies in the CHAP.
World. 2. By INTERNAL AIDS. XIX.
3. By EXTERNAL MOTIVES of
future Rewards and Punishments. 4. By HELPS
AND INSTRUMENTS. Is not Natural
Religion, the Religion of the End, secured to
Practice, and endeared to due Performance by
all these and many more Advantages, to every
Christian, than to any *modern* Deist?

DOES not these *four* added to the Talent of *Reason*, the common Blessing of Nature, make up the *five Talents* committed to their Trust, for which they will assuredly be brought to an Account at the last Day? Is not the *one Talent* REASON, to be improved and cultivated by Consideration and Reflection on the Attributes of God, the Relations, and Truth of Things? Are not the *two Talents*, REASON and REVELATION, to be encreased and multiplied by the Use of Reason, which leads to Faith; and by the Use of Faith, which exalts and comforts Reason in the Worship and Service, and in the Knowledge of God, and Ourselves, how to Repent, how to Pray, how to Obey? Are not the *Three Talents* (supposing such a Distribution) INTERNAL AID of the Spirit, added to the other two, to be occupied and made most of, by adding the right Use of the last to the two former; *waiting upon* it by due Compliance, augmenting and strengthening it by Prayer to God, in the Name of Christ? Are not the *four Talents* REASON, REVELATION OF CHRIST, INTERNAL AIDS, EXTERNAL MOTIVES, greatly encreasable by the additional Exercises of *Hope* and *Fear*, sedulously

CHAP. lously plying their future Objects and Concerns?
 XIX. But how easily, sociably, and familiarly does
 the *five Talents*, HELPS and INSTRUMENTS, added to the other four, produce five Talents *more*, where any tolerable Care and Fidelity is present to suffer the appointed Helps and Instruments to remove all Obstructions, and push their Skill and Abilities in fructifying each of the Talents, to the *Joy of the Lord*, that gave them, and the much greater Joy of the Servant that used them? They bounce, and riot even to Licentiousness, in the Argument of God's *Natural Goodness*, yet, when that Goodness has abounded from Heaven, explicitly and most evidently *Four-fold* more than the common Blessings of Nature, to lead *them* to Repentance; they trample that augmented conspicuous Goodness under Foot, scorn the most Divine Invitations to Repentance, and hate the Light of the best Method, that the Reason of Heaven could concert, or Earth approve of, for their Reconciliation to God, and Righteousness.

AND therefore the Conclusion both in Heaven and Earth, rises up in Judgment against them, in all Charity, as well as Justice, pronouncing their Friendship and Zeal for Natural Religion all Sham, and Hypocrisy; and that the true Tendency of their affected officious Zeal, in all its Operations, (according to the late Endeavours of some of them, who best understand their own Schemes and Views, for destroying the Liberty of Human Agents, and likewise the very Distinction between *Good* and *Evil*, inherent in the eternal Law of Reason and Morality, a Scheme that dethrones God, and villainizes Human Nature at once; makes Virtue, and Vice

CHAP. Vice a Creature of *Human Laws*, vagrant, mutable, whimsical, like the *Fashions* of Countries) the true Tendency, I say, of their Proceedings most manifestly is, to subvert and disannul Natural Religion, as well as Christianity, and to effect the former through the Sides of the latter.

III. I OBSERVE to them, that *they* have receiv'd the *five Talents*, and bury all five in the Ground; and therefore are in a *four-fold* worse State, than those who receiv'd but *one Talent*, and did in like manner. These last argued their Excuse from the *Austerity* of God; which being an egregious Fallacy in Reasoning, as well as a prodigious lazy Deceit and Treachery to themselves, they were justly condemn'd out of their own Mouths. The *modern* Deist steps up, at the Day of Judgment, and according to his usual Fallacy, argues his Excuse from the *Goodness* of God.—“ Lord, if thou hadst not been so *very good* to me, I had been a better Man! 'Tis true, you preach'd in our Streets, and laid down your Life for Sinners, and I was sufficiently acquainted with your Gospel, but I did not think you was in earnest, neither did I care to be oblig'd to Duty by too many Reasons and Arguments, or to run those Hazards of being good! ”— To whom the Lord may be suppos'd to reply; “ O thou most wicked Servant, thou condemnest thyself out of thine own Mouth: *Is thine Eye evil, because I am good?* Thine Iniquities are enhanced from my abundant Goodness! To all thy Sins thou hast added the blackest Ingratitude against Heaven, and the horriest Impiety upon Earth, in denying any Possibility

CHAP. "lity of any Revelation or Commerce from
XIX. "Heaven, between God and his Creature Man,
"a Father and his own Children! *Five Talents*
"thou hast receiv'd, and for the Abuse of every
"one of them thou shalt answer! Thou vainly
"thoughtest thy self an *Angel* in Understand-
"ing! Go thou therefore to the Flames, the
"hottest Flames, prepared for those *Apostate*
"wicked Spirits! Ignorance may move Pity,
"but CONTEMPT of *Goodness* can de-
"serve no Mercy!"

FOR indeed, the true Argument of the *Hazard* from the Advantages of the Gospel, above mention'd by the Author of *Christianity as old, &c.* turns wholly against themselves. When God gives a Man a great Estate; and there is a *Hazard* in not using it well; where does it lie? In the Estate? or in the User and Occupier of it? If it is in his Power to improve and raise himself upon the Occasion, and by good Use lay up a good Foundation against the Time to come, ought he to reject the Blessing, or refuse the Trust? Or, if a particular Body of People receive a Charter from their Sovereign of singular explicit Grants and Privileges, upon very easy Conditions; is it right in any of them, to spurn at it, or take Occasion from that particular obliging Goodness and Foundation of Gratitude, in being so *particularly* favour'd above others, ungratefully to arraign the Sovereign, because the same Charter is not as explicitly given to all the World, and all at once; or to draw up a Manifesto, as they have done, to the rest of the World, that they look upon him to be very silly and impertinent to offer *them* such a Favour; that they will run no risk of any extraordinary

traordinary Obligation from him, and therefore CHAP.
throw it back in his Face. XIX.

BUT, if there is a severe Penalty annex'd to such a brutish and inhuman Usage, ought not the true Rational, instead of the false *Panick* Fear, to seize such Wretches? What a dreadful accumulating Hazard they must needs run, by such a Treatment of their most benign, potent Sovereign! In this Country how should they bless and consider themselves as born to Virtue and to the best Religion of the Means for attaining it? under Disadvantages and Incumbrances of Inclinations to the contrary, it is some Degree of Virtue in the Heathens to strive after the Religion of the End; but for the other not to endeavour after it by the facilitating Means of Christianity, must be extreme Damnation at that Day, when their Iniquities will convince them to their Faces.

THEY give all Heathens a Claim of Merit to the Means of the Gospel, yet themselves enjoy it, alas! beyond their Merit, only to make a Mock at it, and receive eternal Scorn for their Pains. And therefore the Virtues of an honest Heathen doing their best in Repentance, and Prayer, and sincere Obedience with an Intention of pleasing God, in the Influence of that Belief, *that he is a Rewarder*, will be made acceptable to God thro' the unknown Mediator, who died for them; whilst the Repentance and Prayer of those who disdainfully reject him, where he is propos'd, and vouch'd by the strongest Testimonials, will not be accepted of God, nor recommended by the Mediator. For these Men to hope Acceptance, as long as they continue in

CHAP. in the same Mind, is to make those equal in
XIX. God's Favour, whose Actions and Behaviour are
unequal: It may be charitably expected there-
fore that the Virtues of the former will be
Christen'd with Acceptation, whilst the seeming
Virtues of the latter, I mean the *Infidel Deist*,
destitute of, nay scorning the *real Principle*, will
be disdain'd by him, who only gains Admittance
to, and Acceptance with their God.

AND that the Sins of the former will be but
obscure, and to be winked at; at the same, the
Sins of the other are *splendid* with a Witness,
even unto Infamy, calling to Heaven for Ven-
geance; which seems to make that Position,
*that Man in his Natural State, can't turn, or pre-
pare himself for good Works*, to be remarkably
truest with respect to *modern Deists*, who resolve
to adhere to their *Natural State*, in despite of the
Christian spiritual one, which the Revelation of
Jesus Christ would put them into.

IF they had any Sense of Gratitude, they
should thank God, that they were born since the
Advent of *Christ*, in a *Christian Country*, and a
Protestant Nation; if it was but in Imitation of
Plato, who thank'd Providence, that he was
born in *Greece*, and not among the Barbarians;
and in the Days of *Socrates*, from whom he re-
ceiv'd that Knowledge and Instruction which
render'd him so eminent; and, I hope, was a
Preparative for another World. And conse-
quently, that the Degeneracy of many Heathens
sunk even into some Degrees of Stupidity ap-
proaching to Brutality, is not so bad, as the
others INFIDELITY, and APOSTACY from
Christianity. For *these* see, and have the best
Opportunities

CHAP. Opportunities of seeing, therefore their Sin and CHAP.
Condemnation remaineth of loving Darknes ra- XIX.
ther than Light. *I may well then take to witness*
the Grace of the Pagan Deists against the *modern*
Deists, as so much worse than Heathens! 2 *Esai.*
i. 37. And as the Obligations of a moral Agent
rise in Number from the Knowledge and Publi-
cation of the Divine will, the Magnitude and
Proportion of that manifold Obligation may be
clearly collected from the Clearness of the Evi-
dence, the Reasonableness, and Usefulness of the
Revelation, which surrounds *these*, and is shut
out from the Eyes of the other: It will ever re-
main true, and irrefragable also, that *where the*
Gospel is so publish'd, it is *absolutely* necessary to
Salvation, and there is an indispensable Necessity
of receiving and believing it; whilst the *Pagans*,
in their ignorant State, are excused of that Ne-
cessity, till it is effectually offer'd to them: Mean
time, they are not excluded from the common
Benefits and extensive Salvation of it, to some
of the many Mansions of Happiness, prepar'd
for those who diligently seek to please God:
And that the *Sufficiency* of Reason may be a very
good Plea for *their* Guidance, whilst it can be
none at all to a *modern Deist*, who wilfully turns
away from a greater Light.

As many Heathens as practice Virtue, and
desire the Aids of Heaven, with a View princi-
pally to another World, diligently seeking to
please God in prospect of his being a *Rewarder*
(and such he is only through the Mediator) have
a right kind, though imperfect Faith, have such
Objects, due Intention and Direction of their
Virtue, as God requires, such as only constitutes
Religion towards him; and consequently, are
more

CHAP. XIX. more than in a *possible* Way of pleasing him; whilst the *modern* Deist wilfully spurning his Rewards, and the Mediator appointed by him, and all those *virtuous Intentions* and *Dependencies*, is under an *impossible* Way of pleasing God.

IV. I MIGHT observe to them, that this Objection of theirs with respect to *Providence*, does in Fact overtake them in regard to their Natural Religion. "If all Mankind are Creatures of the same Creator, and Fellow-Creatures with one another, must not all their religious Duties, as they are Creatures of the same God, and Fellow-Creatures with one another, be the same*?" Yet *their Natural Religion*, either as to Uniformity, or Universality in the *Pagan Religions*, is observed to be in Theory, and Practice, in vast unequal Degrees; from some Knowledge of God, to no Notion at all. But these Matters have been urged by others with great Advantage of Reasoning, therefore I pass them over.

I WOULD only put a civil Question to them; since it is undeniable Matter of Fact, that *here a Bit* of Reason, and *there a Bit* of Reason is dispens'd to these *Pagans*; is God, or Man in the Fault? Does God do this, or suffer it to be done *knowingly*, or *ignorantly*? Let them answer which way they will, they are not only fast in the same Trap they lay for others, but by the Tenor of their own Argument, they sink into *Atheism*. For, if the high-priz'd disputatious *Bit* of Reason that fall to their Share is so miserably cultivated, as to reject future Rewards and

* *Christianity as old, &c.* pag. 174, 361.

Punishment in the distributive Sense, that rejects CHAP. XIX. the *moral* Attributes of God; and that sets aside God, as a *Governor*; and that to all Intents and Purposes *banishes* his Existence. They may if they please, by their Management of their *Bit* of Reason, be at the Head of the *Animal World*, that is solely govern'd by *sensible* Rewards and Punishments; but then, they must be contented to subside *below Man*, whose Characteristick is, a *Medium* between Brute and Angel. The *Angel* has his Reward in being Religious, and continues to be so upon the *intrinsic* Merit of Virtue, that he may not lose the Reward; and therefore *Man's* Reason and Distinction is, to aim at their Reward, to animate him to attain their Virtue in a State competent to himself hereafter. But as these high-spirited Persons disdain those Prospects, they must necessarily fall short of those Attainments, which make them *Man*, and make them *Religious*. And therefore how certain soever, how manifestly certain soever *other* human Creatures appear to be destitute of Religion, still they are upon a Par with these *Belles Lettres*; because, sunk as they are, they are nevertheless, equally at the Head of the *Animal World*? What then do these refin'd Wits, these *Railleurs*, get by these low Arguments, but to be convinc'd that Religion, Christian Religion is both Wit, and Wisdom?

V. I WOULD particularly observe to *modern* Deists that their Scheme of *Morality*, or *Natural Religion*, is fundamentally wrong; it is a Body without a Head; they must begin their System all over again. If they would entitle the Practiser to any Benefit, they must lay the Foundation where his Hope lies, in a future State, in

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Faith and Dependence upon a rewarding Providence; of which Christianity is the clearest Evolution, and Demonstration in the World. For as the End of Virtue is to *please* God, the Foundation of Virtue standeth sure, and is stamp'd in eternal Characters and Relations ever since the contrary of Virtue, Sin, enter'd our sublunary World, *without Faith it is impossible to please God*; and what is that Faith that is the Regent of all Human Virtue? *That God is, and is a Rewarder, &c.* The Morality of the Heathens, who knew not the Motives these reject, is therefore preferable to their less moral Scheme. That *Catholic* Faith, *that God is a Rewarder of those who diligently seek to please him*, obvious to the reasoning Faculty, and universally diffused to the Expectation of *Mankind*, who would be Religious towards God (though derived from the original *Promise*) in effect secures, and implicitly acknowledges the GOSPEL, or the true moral Motives of the Christian Religion. For if God is a *Rewarder*, that secures and supposes their *Access* to and *Acceptance* with him, and Admittance into *Heaven*, which are the three sanctifying Benefits of *Jesus Christ our Saviour*: And convinces the Judgment of the Reasonableness of depending upon God for their Happiness, in their best Endeavours for securing his Favour, with respect to the Distributions of a Life to come; at the same time it has its religious Operations, in subduing the Will and Affections, the moral, disobedient, and most ungovernable Part in Man. In this Faith *Enoch, Noah, Job, &c.* pleased God, steer'd their Course by this Pole Star, and passed safe through this troublesome World. In this Expectation, and Reasoning upon the Goodness of God, *Socrates*, and innumerable

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merable others in all Ages of the World, to be collected from the four Winds, under Heaven, though explicitly ignorant of the true Mediator *Jesus Christ*; yet *trusting* religiously in God, that the *Judge of the whole Earth* will at last *do right* to all his Creatures, when he takes an Account, and finally makes a Discrimination of Virtue, and Vice, worthy of his holy Nature, and his wise Government; will nevertheless through him, who equally died for *them*, find Acceptance with God; to be entitled to his rewarding Favour.

THAT this is the only true Way of knowing, teaching, or practising Morality (or, in their own Style, to *know, profess, believe, and practise* it) is demonstrably evident from the Method of the Teacher of all Righteousness, the best Preacher of Morality in the World, as they themselves acknowledge; who, when he first open'd to the World his most super-excellent Morality, both with respect to the End, and to the Means of his Religion, crowns every one of his *Eight Beatitudes*, severally, with a *particular Reward*. This is the Reason why the Gospel is so constantly represented under the Notion of a *Kingdom*; which supposes a *Judge*; which includes *Rewards and Punishments* eminently distinguish'd upon the obedient, and disobedient to the Laws of the Kingdom. And it seems pretty remarkable, that the Commendations, Threatnings, and Encouragements to the seven Churches of *Asia*, and so to all succeeding Churches, *Rev. ii. and iii.* turn upon those Ends of Religion, or Deviations from them (the *Eight Beatitudes*) and the Means of attaining them, *viz.* Faith in Christ, under several Ideas

CHAP. of Salutation, with much the same sort of Rewards in his Hand, as observed before. And it is observable that *Tully* * brings *Scipio* confessing himself much more active and vigilant in the Race and Pursuit of Virtue, from the Supposition of having Heaven for his Prize.

BUT *these* Gentlemen, wiser in their own vain Conceit than all other Teachers, reject the Resurrection of the Body, reject *future Rewards* and *Punishments* as an *Heresy*, in their general System of Morality; one of them admitting the Thoughts only in a particular Case, as observ'd before; when they speak of them generally as a Principle of Virtue and Religion, I appeal to all their Readers whether it is not most constantly, if not always, with Contempt and Derision? What is that but obstinately declaring how much they are bent to reproach and oppose God, the Constitution of Things, and the Practice of all wise Men in the World? And with the like Self-conceit of Sufficiency of *Knowledge*, disbelieve with the old *Gnostick* Hereticks, the *future Judgment of Quick and Dead*?

AND thus separating the Body from the Spirit that enlivens it, they make a dead Carcase of Morality. Shut themselves out from the Pale of future Happiness and Salvation: And sooner will the *Publicans* and *Harlots*; *Hottentots*, and *Laplanders* enter into the Kingdom of Heaven and true Religion, than these modern *Pharisees* in Morality. They suppose an End, without competent Means, and Motives in the moral or religious Conduct of Man; which is as

* *Semina Scipionis.*

enormous

enormous an Absurdity, as in Nature, to expect an Effect without a Cause. They divorce the Performance of Duty to God, our Neighbour, and Ourselves, from the true Obligations and moral Reasons of those Duties. They separate and distinguish Virtue from *Religion*, or what amounts to the same, Morality from true real Christianity; which is putting asunder what God, and Reason, and the Constitution of Things have most surely join'd together. And so, by a Scheme of Irreligion and Confusion resolutely divorce themselves from the Favour of God, the common Honesty, common Reason, common Faith, of Mankind.

THIS Principle of Principles, especially in its Evolution of the *Mediator*, seems to be that *Desideratum* or wanted *Medium*, for making manifest and projecting the Light of Proof for exhibiting a *Demonstration* of true Morality and Religion, which the great Mr. *Locke* perhaps had not the full Notion of in his frequent Declarations; for still *, (tho' invited) he declined to give the Sample, how Morality is *capable* of Demonstration; by which he must mean the Natural Religion of Man as he is a Sinner, manifested as we see it has been in all its Dependencies, by that Light which came into the World to render it plain and perspicuous.

THIS great Fundamental of Natural Religion, that God is a *Rewarder*, &c. without Faith in which it is impossible to please him, effectually confutes all the four sorts of Deists.
1. Those, who allow the Being of a God, but

* See Mr. *Locke's* Letters.

CHAP. XIX. deny his *Providence*. For, if God is a *Rewarder*, that supposes him a *Punisher*, and that implies Providence and careful Inspection over Mens Actions, in order to support his Justice and Equity in Rewarding and Punishing. 2. Those, who grant a Providence, but deny the *Distinction* between *Good* and *Evil*. For, if God is a *Rewarder*, and *Punisher*, that can import no less than that there are some Things naturally *pleasing* to him, and some Things *displeasing*; which establishes the eternal Distinction between Good and Evil. 3. Those, who admit Providence, and the Difference of Good and Evil, but deny the *Immortality of the Soul*. For, if Rewards are not distributed in this Life according to Mens Behaviour by the constant distinguishing Balance of Justice, it is indubitably certain, it will be so in an After-state; and that ascertains the Immortality of the Soul. 4. Those, who admit all the three former, but deny the *positive Distribution* of Rewards and Punishments in the future State; and that Gospel which has brought that Life and Immortality to Light; and by so doing, subvert Natural Religion.

IT is not the Writings and Opinions of these sort of Authors, or any of the ancient Philosophers that make and constitute the *Law* of Nature, any more than the Opinions and Comments of Lawyers make the Law of the State; but Reference had to *God* the *Legislator*, the supreme Author of Nature, and to the *Sanctions* he has reserv'd and fix'd, and a conscientious Regard to his eternal Justice in seeing them effectually and distinguishingly take place upon the Obedient and Disobedient, that makes it the Law of Nature, gives the Authority, and founds the moral Obligation.

Obligation. But those Sanctions, which are to CHAP. XIX. clear up the Conduct of Providence, and vindicate all the Perfections and Attributes of the heavenly Governor, before the Universe of rational Agents, cannot take place without a positive distinguishing Retribution, and a manifest Revelation of the righteous Judge of the whole Earth. Why not then worthy of God, as it is most beneficial to Man, to give unto Man, both a previous *written* Revelation of the Duties and Transgressions of that Law, and likewise the sure *Sanctions* of them? Thus the Law of Nature rightly consider'd, *infers* a reveal'd Law, and *establishes* a written Revelation of the Will of God in the Desires of all Men.

AND as the *Religion* of Nature truly delineated is founded, more especially in our present lapsed State, in this great Foundation Truth of all Revelation, and Recovery to Divine Favour, That God is, and is a *Rewarder* of those who diligently seek to please him, rather than in the Consideration of Truth in general; insomuch as that particular Truth, in the Reason of Things, actuates and enlivens the whole System of Morality, refers it to God, and turns it into *Religion*; which Truth in general does not, though it contradicts it not.

VIRTUE and Truth are as different as a Part is from the Whole; every Virtue is Truth, but every Truth is not Virtue. When, as in *Job* and *Socrates*, the Reason and Understanding, Will and Affections are duly (Man-like) disposed to consider and retain, and in the Prevalency of all those Powers attach'd with all *Fidelity*, to that fundamental Basis of all moral Truth

and Virtue, viz. *That God is, and is a Rewarder*, &c. so as to form the whole Plan of *moral Behaviour* upon it, as well in the Prosperity, as Adversity of this dependent Life; the Substance, or rational Ground or *Confidence*, (as in the *Margin*) *Heb. xi. 1.* of such unseen Things heartily confided in, is *Faith*; and out of that Direction and Intention arises the whole *Concern* and *Obligation* of Morality which appertains to the Law or Religion of Nature. And therefore the Religion of Nature, *rightly understood*, infers the only true Religion of the *Mediator*, JESUS CHRIST, and establishes the written Revelation of that *Way, Truth and Life* in the Value, or in the Desires of all reasonable and unprejudiced Men, as the best and most perfect, as well as the *only Manner*, *HOW* God is a *Rewarder*, &c. with every thing else that follows from that Faith, being in all Wisdom, as well as Mercy, the *fittest* both to the pure spotless Nature of God, and the present conscious sinful State of Man. For if Natural Reason says, God is a *Rewarder*; and the Voice of Nature says, *he beareth not*, much less rewardeth, *Sinners*; and the Experience of Mankind confesses that *if we say that we have no Sin, we deceive ourselves and the Truth is not in us*; then there must be a *third Person*, thro' whose Hands the *Reward* is *conferr'd*: and, previously to that in order to preserve God whole in all his Attributes as he is infinitely worthy of them all, he must become, or must have been willing and qualified to be the righteous *Medium* of the Difference, for reconciling the punishing Justice, with the forgiving Mercy of God. And who is that but the *Mediator* I have been speaking of, and what is the Gospel but the *good News* of Remission of Sins, and eternal Life, in that Method?

NAY,

NAY, it infers Christianity in the great Article of the *Resurrection* of the BODY. For, if God is a *Rewarder* of Man, then Man doing his Duty in that Faith, will meet with a Reward worthy of God to confer. Now Sin, deriving its Source from the *Devil*, being, in his first State, an unnatural Thing (for that can never be natural which is the Abhorrence of our Nature) as well to Man, as to the Constitution of Things, occasion'd the Punishment, *Death*, the Separation of Soul and Body, the two constituent Parts; which Separation was to be sure unnatural to Man, and beside the original Design of his Maker. As the Sinner therefore transgresses in that *Body of Sin and Death* which is Partner to the Soul; if he is ever to be forgiven, and rewarded moreover, according to the Supposition, for diligently seeking God, then he must be recompens'd in *both* Parts of himself, which infers the Resurrection of his Body, wherein he both sinn'd, and serv'd God; and there can be nothing to hinder such a compleat re-instating Reward, but the Want of *Power* in the Rewarder; a Notion repugnant to Reason, and utterly unworthy of God. But God having not only pass'd the Sentence of Death, but inflicted it moreover, some Person must interpose as a *Saviour* from him, to take off that Sentence, and restore the Body to *Life and Immortality* also.

AND who is that but *Christ the Lord*? He, and he only is the Saviour of the *Body*, as well as of the Soul; and, tho' the Immortality of the Soul was every where talk'd of and believ'd in most Places, he was the *first* that brought

CHAP. brought that *new Thing*, the Life and Immortality of the BODY to light, by its *Resurrection*; which seems to be the true real Sense of *Gospel* Life and Immortality. And was not the first Man presently after the Sentence of Death, comforted with the *Promise* of this Redeemer? And it is very obvious to believe, that *Job* had the Tradition and Relish of this Promise upon his Mind for preserving his Integrity, in the Profession of his immoveable Faith, that he *knew that his Redeemer liv'd*, &c. Most certainly, God could never have been an exceeding great Reward to *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, any otherwise than to their Faith and full Persuasion of the Resurrection of the *Dead*, i. e. of their *Body*; but must prove a very defective Rewarder, and might be asham'd to be call'd *their God*, if *that* was not accomplish'd; if that was not secured to them, he deserv'd not the Title of being *their God*, or so much as their constant Friend. For, if he assur'd and contracted himself to them to be *their God*, whilst living in the *Body*; they might, and did assure themselves that God changes not, and therefore, tho' their Bodies died, there must be an After-change in them, to make their Corruption live again, that they may be again reintegrated in their proper Persons, *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and for ever enjoy the Consolation and Reward of their Travail, of God's being not the God of the Dead, but of the *Living*. Tho' there were a thousand domestick Proofs of his Love and Care, that he was *Abraham's God*, *Isaac's God*, and *Jacob's God*, yet where was the Evidence of his individual Love and Respect to the Compound of their Persons, if one half thereof was to lye always in the Grave? therefore *Abraham* being dead

dead, *Isaac* dead, *Jacob* dead, and so every other diligent seeker of God, must all become *living*, and their Faith secures it to them. *The just shall live by this Faith*, and feed and support their present Life upon that pregnant Justice and Promise of God.

NOR can any thing less be a proper Reward for good Men, who diligently seek God, or worthy of him to confer. For tho' their Souls in a separate State may be as happy as God intended they should be without their Partner the Body, yet, as the Death of the Body is the certain Punishment of Sin; if that Punishment continues for ever, he would for ever reward and punish at the same Time; but that being inconsistent as well with the Divine Perfections, as the compleat Happiness of Man, there must be a Re-union of Body and Soul to Life and Immortality; that the *Man* may be compleated, and released from all Effects of Death, and live, and be entire, and be immortal also. The Body being an essential Part of Man, according to God's original Composition of his Nature, the Salvation of *Man* can never be compleated but in the Resurrection of that Part of him. For, according to the Nature of Things, as the Separation of Soul and Body is with the greatest Reluctance; not an originally natural, but a superinduced, violent State; the Soul must be supposed to retain an ardent Desire of Re-union to its dear Mate and Partner, (better habited and conditioned) and that Desire, being reasonable, and as natural as the closing of a Wound in the Flesh, would be frustrated, and Man, the Delight of God, without a Resurrection of his Body, would remain unclothed, disjunct, without-

without-himself, and beside-himself. So comfortable and agreeable to the Nature of Man and the true Constitution of things is the Religion of *Christ*, whilst it consults the Resurrection of the Body.

BUT, I wonder, how any modern *Deist* can look a Man in the Face, when, joining in a Rebellion against *Christ* and his Religion, he is in a direct Confederacy for robbing every Man he meets of one half of his Constitution, as far as in his Power, by *denying* the Resurrection of his Body; and at the same time seriously exposes (tho' under a Laugh of ridiculing the Contrary) the Ridiculousness of his own Faith and Sentiments, in running directly counter to the true Nature and Constitution of Things. For the *Deists* I have been arguing with, reject this Faith, and the *positive Distributions* of future Rewards and Punishments, which can only be explicitly known from Revelation, either who is the Judge, or what will be the Sentence; and so by rejecting the *positive Obligations* of Morality and Religion, they consequently subvert both the Law and Religion of Nature.

TAKE away those Rewards and Punishments, there will be neither Law nor Religion, and so in proportion as you diminish one, you lessen the Use and Operation of the other, and stop their good Effect for this World, as well as for the next. Whoever is in earnest persuaded, and not afraid of the Certainty of them, in general, either in a real, or affected State of Natural Religion, will ever be sincerely disposed to receive further Discoveries from Revelation as it offers, and be glad of an *opening*, for bringing their implicit, to the Light of that Faith, which

is

is explicit and particular in so affecting a Concern. For reveal'd Faith is not only the Strength and Stability, but the truest and best Explanation of Natural Faith; unfolding and displaying as well the Knowledge of the true Nature of God and his Ways more and more perfectly, as the Knowledge of the Nature of Man and his Ways; revealing the true Source of the Corruption of Human Nature, to the Truth not only of its Cure and Remedy, but of its highest Happiness and greatest Perfection. *YE BELIEVE IN GOD, BELIEVE ALSO IN ME.*

AND thus, I hope, I have not brought an unsupported, but a well grounded Accusation against *these Authors*, that they have both been guilty of *Misrepresenting*, as well Natural Religion, as Christianity.

AND that the Tendency of their Principles directly lead to *Atheism*; and consequently that the Conduct of their Disciples without a timely Change, and Repentance, will inevitably conclude in it. And therefore it is hoped that they will at last see their dangerous Mistake, and candidly admit of *this Cure*.

P. S. IT has been disagreeable to my Temper, to bring a consequential Charge of *Atheism* against Persons *professing Theism*. But I shou'd have proved as unfair on the Side of Christianity and Truth, as they are partial and unjust against it, if I had not calmly and charitably laid the direct Tendency of their Principles before them, and supported it with convincing Arguments. If Natural Religion and Morality is the Spring-Head

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CHAP. XIX. Head of all true Religion, and includes, by just Deduction of Reason, latent Christianity in it; if true Natural Religion and Morality consist in a Connexion of the Understanding, Will, Affections; and Actions of Man to God, governing by Rewards and Punishments in a future State; and if these Men poison Religion in this Fountain, they consequently take away all true Religion in its first Rise, and its after Revelation, in its Cause and in its Effect, which is the worst of *Atbeism* under a disguis'd Name: For that is no Religion, which cannot truly please God, and will not benefit Man, in his after State. Their whole System, instead of retaining any Reasonableness, or Godliness in it, takes the Name of God, and Reason, in vain.

BUT without Faith that he is, and is a Rewarder, &c. it is impossible to please him, or to come to him by way of Religion. To believe merely with them that he is, does not constitute Religion, unless it is believed also that he is a Rewarder, &c. that begins and ties upon his Faculties, the Attachment of Man's Behaviour and continual Dependance upon God's Favour, his Divine Attributes, and his Providential Dispensations. And what is that when fully explain'd, but *ye believe in God, believe also in me?* It is impossible to please God, or come to him without believing him a Rewarder, &c. Behold I come quickly; and my REWARD is with ME, to give to every Man according as his Work shall be? Rev. xxii. 12. So that a Door (Christ calls himself that Door) naturally and freely opens out of Natural Religion (as well as by Prescription out of *Judaism*) into Christianity; the latter being a Commentary, Supplement, and Complement to

to the former: Shewing the only true Original of Sin and Error, how Men are naturally Slaves to that, and Error; and providing, at the same time, the only true Remedy for both. But they, who willfully bar the Door against Christianity, and shut up their Windows against its Light, prefer Darkness to Light, destroy all Religion both in the Text and in the Commentary, before God, and before Man.

J. CHRIST is so far from being a Fable according to the Sarcasms of the *Deists*, that Human Nature, and the Religion of Nature is rather the Fable, and *Jesus Christ* the MORAL of it. And as the *Inspiration of the Almighty giveth Men Understanding; puts Wisdom in the inward Parts, and gives Understanding to the Heart; gives Wisdom to the Wise, and Knowledge to them that know Understanding;* by corresponding, as they ought to God and Nature, in Virtue of the Faith natural to Human Reason, *That he is the Rewarder, &c.* So, all certain Divine Revelation, and true Scripture from Heaven, is, as it affirms, *given by Inspiration, &c.* for elucidating and revealing, for particularizing and catechizing from Faith to Faith that glorious *Primordium*, that *Punctum saliens* of all true Virtue; as the Mediator *Jesus Christ*, is the Life, and Circulation of that Life, when once formed within us by the Gospel, and the *Resurrection, and the Life*, to consummate it in Happiness everlasting. And let every modern *Deist*, who manifestly lacks that Wisdom, ask it of God, ask it honestly, seek him diligently in the Faith of Nature; and God will give it him liberally; and upbraid him not; and that Reason and Demonstration which he insists upon, *i. e. intrinsic Excellence*, will join with his

CHAP. XIX. his God in telling him, he has it in his Hands; and in bidding him read it over again; if not for the Penance of his Sins; at least for the Improvement of his Reason, and for shewing his better Respect to God, and to himself: making his humble Confession to God, and the World; That the Authority of God, and his *Holy Scriptures*, or *God in Christ reconciling the World to himself*, is indeed Sacred and Divine; since it does so evidently appear, That they invest themselves with that Authority from *the Reason of Things*. And as the Kingdom of God, of Christ, of Heaven, is indeed thus founded in the truest *Reason within us*, inward Conviction, free Choice, and in order to that, publish'd in the Revelation; therefore it is said by the Founder, *the Kingdom of God is WITHIN US*; and by the Apostle, that Christ the *Word*, is the *Light that lighteth every Man that cometh into the World*, to the *Reason of Things*, which leads to that Kingdom of God in Christ. Which made Origen * appeal to Celsus, *Whether it was not the Agreeableness of the Principles of Faith with the common Notions of Human Nature, which prevail'd most upon all candid and ingenuous Auditors of them?* Therefore the Sentence must needs be just, *be that believeth shall be saved*; and he that *believeth not* is condemn'd by the Law of Nature as well as Christ. But I hope, and pray, that timely Self-conviction may prevent future Condemnation, and lead them into everlasting Felicity. Where I would gladly lodge all People who read this Book, and to that *Amen* shall be the *Finis*.

* 'Εἰ μὴ τὰ τῆς πίστεως ἡμῶν ταῖς κοιναῖς ἐρχομένης ἀναγωγῇ, μετατίθῃ τὸς εὐγνωμόνως ἀκούοντας τῶν λεγομένων. *Orig. cont. Cels. Lib. III. p. 139.*

END of the Second VOLUME.

AN APPENDIX,

IN ANSWER to a BOOK, Intituled,

THE
MORAL PHILOSOPHER:

OR, A
DIALOGUE

BETWEEN
A CHRISTIAN DEIST,

AND
A CHRISTIAN JEW.

L O N D O N:

Printed for the A U T H O R:

And Sold by W. INNYS and R. MANBY, at the West
End of St. Paul's. MDCCXXXVII.



A N

APPENDIX.

In Answer to a BOOK, intitled,

The Moral Philosopher, &c.

WHILE this Edition of the foregoing Sheets was pretty far advanc'd in the Press, there was publish'd a remarkable BOOK, entitled, *The Moral Philosopher*, in a Dialogue between *Philaethes*, a Christian *Deist*, and *Theophanes*, a Christian *Jew*. I agree with the ingenious Author, that the Matters therein consider'd and debated, are indeed of the utmost Consequence in Religion: but that the Arguments on both Sides are impartially represented, I can by no means agree with him, for Reasons that will appear afterwards.

IN most Sentiments, and in the Main of his Book, he is pleas'd to accord with the *Deists* I have lately consider'd; and so far he appears to be a real and most zealous *Deist*. This harmony of Opinion will be shewn presently. But as he

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differs

differs from Them in *some* Things, the Lovers of *Novelty*, in Religion, will doubtless be surpriz'd to meet with these following *New Things*, which are not, that I know of, to be met with in any modern Books of Deism. (1.) This *various* Author neither receiving the Christian Revelation in Whole, nor rejecting it in Whole, but by an assumed Prerogative above all others, admits and excludes, damns and commends by Parts and Parcels, just as they favour or disagree with his New System: He seems to set up an Office of Curiosities and new Discoveries of many strange Things, with respect to what is, and is not certainly *interpolated* in that Revelation. * He, I say, is so far a Philosopher, as to receive the Resurrection of the *Body* † into his Scheme, with future Rewards and Punishments, calling it ‡ the *Abrahamick* Religion. But I doubt, whether any sort of Deists, whilst they continue such, will approve of his Concession, or thank him for this Article of Belief. For, say they, we who are known to set up upon the Foot of believing nothing but what we thoroughly comprehend with our Reason, should we advance so far as to subscribe to that very odd Difficulty of Faith, as all our Ancestors, of dear Memory, have ever acknowledged (and every Philosopher for that Reason has smiled at, and dissented from it) with what Face can we any more appear to scruple the lesser Difficulties of Christianity, as explain'd by the most Rational, or forbore to be so by the Wifest? You believe too much, Mr. *Philalethes*, for an Orthodox Deist; and too little for a Sound Christian. Which of the Two will receive you into their Number, or make

* Page 440. † Page 348. ‡ Page 349.

their

their Acknowledgments for this Piece of Service, must be left to the Event.

HOWEVER this Philosopher ought to have justice done him as to these Particulars; and I contend in the first Place among his Admirers, to appear with Pleasure, in giving him Thanks for the foresaid ingenuous Stipulations with the Christians, in the Cause of Religious Truth. He not only admits of future Rewards and Punishments in an indefinite Sense, but has the Grace beyond all Modern Deists to contend for them in an unusual Manner; his Words are, "It is certain that if God governs moral Agents at all, he must govern them by Hope and Fear, or by such a wise and suitable Application of Rewards and Punishments, as the different Circumstances of Persons, and the Ends of Government require. And these Rewards and Punishments must be such as are not the natural, necessary Consequences of the Actions themselves, since every one must see that this would be no Government at all, and that the Case in this Respect, must be the very same, whether we suppose any rectoral Justice, or any Presence or Operation of God in the World or not. And yet this which is really no Government at all, is all the general Providence which some seem willing to allow." * And his Defence of the Use of *Prayer* from p. 179 to 197, against *Fatalism* and *Atheism* is very deserving of Commendation.

THESE hopeful Advances ought certainly to be cherish'd in any who calls himself a *Deist*,

* Page 189, 190.

and not a little admired at from a *new* Oracle of that Profession. The Penetration and Compass of his Judgment appear indeed beyond the common Rate of Writers on that Side. He saw clearly the Absurdity of Fatalism and Atheism, and the equal, but yet common Folly of those who would screen that Opinion under the Name of *Deist*. His love of Truth, at least the open Appearances of it, *Consistency*, made him abhor such Contradiction in Name, as well as detest the Scandal offer'd to himself retaining the Name of *Deist*: He has therefore very justly cut the Name out of the Catalogue of all the Tribes of that Denomination. But I hope as he is so far true to Reason as to enlarge his Faith with the forefaid Articles, that, by the Influence of his great Judgment, he may happily bring them into the Fold of Religion; and then I am loth to despair, nay willing to hope, that He at the Head of them, and all the other Deists will be so good to Themselves, and to the plain Consequence of Truth, as to proceed a few easy Steps further, and then they, and he, will be not only almost, but altogether such a true real Christian (inferior in degree) to St. Paul, a glorious Apostle, and the great Hero of this Writer. For as long as he makes those great Doctrines the Basis of his Scheme, which the other Chiefs either denied, or were perfectly indifferent to, he lays a *real* Foundation of God, and Moral Virtue, and at the same Time excommunicates every *Atheist* out of his Society, whom the other ever hitherto care's'd as being *one* with them. So far as he pleads the Cause of God as a *Governor*, that he governs the Moral World by the Influences of those *Godly* Truths; I am ready to infer what he was going to say farther, and shall be allow'd

so

so to do by Himself: That if a Governor, he is questionless the most *perfect* of all Governors and Rulers over Men whatsoever, and that the *greatest Perfection* of Goodness, Mercy, Truth, and Justice must shine out in his Dispensations towards the Children of Men, for illustrating those several Perfections, and celebrating this Divine Governor; such as best consults the Nature and Circumstances of Man, for his good, as a free, moral, accountable Agent, but a frail Performer of his Duty always in this World; and at the same Time, most magnifies the Honour, and best marks out the engaging Excellence, and authoritative Amiability of all his governing Attributes jointly, and severally. If our Moral Philosopher admits this easy *Postulatum*, I hope he is the better disposed both to admit and consider better of the Plea for *Jesus Christ* in his several Offices.

My obscure unpracticed Pen, unskilful of every palliating Artifice, and incapable of adding Strength to any Thing but what down-right Truth affords, in common, to almost every Christian, has already attempted such a *Plea* in the *Mediatorial Scheme* as the only true Religion; and therefore am excused from repeating here. I recommended it with all Candour, and with a very good Intention, to the serious Thoughts of Deists, and at the same Time by way of Contrast, *delineated Deism* (which at *first* might have been a better Title of the Book) because a *true* Representation of it is indeed one way to cure it, without giving Offence to those, who, not loving the Name nor the Application of any Medicine, may be apt to distaste the kind Offer, however over-run with the Distemper they don't care to own, and have, on that Account, the greatest

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need

need of a *Cure*; but if it has its Operation in secret, in administering a better Opinion or Apprehension of *Christianity*, I have my Ends, yet perhaps by so great a Genius and Magisterial a Writer as our Author, it has yet been unseen, or unenquir'd after by him. I have the more Reason, I say, to hope for a candid Audience from him, because he is judicious and ingenuous enough to own *, "That the Means are *as necessary* as the "End." Now the good laudable End, or Religion of the End being Moral Righteousness and Obedience: I have evidently shewn throughout the preceding Sheets, that the Dispensation by *Jesus Christ* is the best Means in the World to that best End; that they have an intimate, efficacious Connexion with it; that if ever they are ineffectual upon Trial, it is altogether from a Misunderstanding, or Misapplication, through the Default of the User; and if he intends the most congruous, by *congenerate* † Means, I have also shewn, and shall farther shew hereafter, that the *Positive, Instituted* Parts of Christianity are of that kind.

Now if the Resurrection of the Body is granted, and future Rewards, eternal Life, as the Gift of God confided in ‡, does not that import and point out *Jesus Christ* in more Aspects, and in an higher Station than Prophet or Teacher, or Deliverer of *Jews only* ||, viz. as our Lord, the *Raiser* of the Dead, our Judge, whom we ought to honour; our *Rewarder*, on whom we depend; and if eternal Life so infinitely disproportioned to our short Stage of defective Virtue (as I have made appear, is the Gift of God, it

* Page 420. † Page 419. ‡ Page 394. || Page 349.
must

must be so to the *Gentile*, as well as Jew, since all Men meet the Wages of Death to which it is opposed; still it is thro' *Jesus Christ*; and is connected to the *Belief* of his being *Son of God*, where-ever the *New Testament* is published, as well as to due Practice resulting from it. And therefore he is either more a Christian than he cares to own, or he does not really believe the Contents of those Doctrines, nor the *New Testament* concerning them, whence he has taken them. How much that diffusive National Belief of Mankind, that *God is a Rewarder of those who diligently seek to please him*, comprehends of the Spirit and Principles of Christianity; See the Index of my Book, *Rewards*.

2. Another *Peculiarity* arrests the Wonder of the Reader, which is the new Dress of the Names, *Christian Jew*, and *Christian Deist*. One would imagine at first, it was owing to some *Jews* and *Deists* living in *Christendom*; but that affords him nothing of the Grounds of such a Denomination. Perhaps it is, because *Names* are sometimes given to put Persons in mind what they *should be*, if so, I hope they will both be converted in due time. But I rather take this fresh Instance to be a farther Confirmation of the Arbitrariness of imposing Names: It puts me in mind of the emphatical Name, *Keep the Faith* Barebones, in our late blessed and enlighten'd times, when inherent Characters were communicated with Names, and Saints infallible were stamp'd unto their lives end, as soon as they came out of their Mothers Womb. But why he should deliberately call the Jew *Christian* for espousing, as appears by the Sequel of his Book, and, according to the Letter of the

the Scripture, adhering to the *Three* Offices and Characters of *Christ*, Prophet, Priest, and King, (I wish all Jews sincerely did so) and, with the same Deliberation, professedly calls himself a *Christian*, when he professes almost in every Page that he receives and minds *Jesus Christ* no farther than as he is a *Prophet*, or Teacher of moral Righteousness; whence this very odd unequal giving and assuming *that* Name in Whole, and in Part, and by one and the same Person; upon what Account, I say, can this strange Phænomenon be presented to the World by a Philosopher, unless it is to demonstrate to it, that he is contented with Two Third Parts less of current Christianity than the other, and that he is nevertheless full as good, nay, believe him who can, the better Christian of the two?

Is it not a little strange and particular, that he should pretend the Letter of Scripture to support his Attachment to one *Third* of the Christian Doctrine, and yet refuse the other *Two* with disdain, when the same literal Sense is as obviously plain and frequent in maintaining one as well as the other? If Figure and Allegory must be called in for interpreting and spiriting away one sort of Office and Character, why is it not applicable to all Three? And then Christ vanishes clear off the Stage; but to keep him at one Corner of it, and, to serve a turn, not suffer him to appear in real, full Character, but confine and degrade him to one of his illustrious Appearances only, is dealing very unjustly, and ungratefully by the best Friend and Benefactor to Mankind. This is opening and shutting Holy Scripture with a Key of his own inventing, of more Art and Dexterity, than the *Pope* ever pretended

pretended to have in his Custody, for making it signify not what it really signifies, but what he pleases to permit it to mean. Is this interpreting or perverting, understanding or confounding, receiving or rejecting those Writings? With like Consistency, and full as much Truth, he might have called himself an *Heathen* Christian, an *Infidel* Orthodox Believer in Christ, or some total Piece of a Thing.

WE have heard of *four* Species of Deists, and every one of them refutable from that Creed of Nature, that *God is a Rewarder*, &c. as I have shewn in my last *Chap.* but he allowing and appealing to that *Principle*, sets up for a *fifth* Species, wiser, as he imagines, than all the rest. But did not the Heathens almost in general retain that Belief? Wherein then is he wiser? Is it in embracing the Resurrection of the Body; and eternal Life as the Gift of God? but both of these he borrows from those Scriptures he ungratefully abuses, and would betray to the other. So that his assum'd Name *Christian*, advances him no farther than a Heathen, (I wish he was but half so honest and true to Discoveries and Improvements of moral Truth, as was *Socrates*) saving his Belief of the Resurrection of the Body, supposing he believes that real Resurrection, which the Heathen Philosophers unanimously rejected, whilst the *Easterns* from all Antiquity held, and to this Day hold a *Transmigration* from Body to Body, and in that Sense, a Life everlasting; but that is so far from being an Advantage to his Cause, that it is the Mill-stone that will sink it: For to embrace a greater seeming Difficulty, and, at the same time, to reject and run away frightened at seemingly

ingly less in the same Revelation, and those as plainly, if not more frequently expressed, betrays a Spirit of Perverseness, Singularity, and Inconsistency, the reverse of *real* free Thinking, impartial Reasoning, and Inquiry.

IF he alledges that his Zeal for Morality, and his Consideration of the Nature and Reason of Things, determines him to this Partiality, and to that filching and mangling of Scripture, I must have leave to reply, having already made out at large, that the *whole* Mediatorial Scheme of the above *three Offices*, is founded in the Nature and Reason of Things, as well as in Scripture; and, upon this last recommending the Thing to the common Understanding of Man, is found as derivable from one, as from the other: And seeing the whole and sole Design of the *positive, peculiar, instituted* Parts of it, at which he is so furiously angry without Cause, is really devoted (as I have made appear) in the greatest Propriety and divine Fitness for assisting and advancing Morality to the highest Perfection of Performance that Human Nature is capable of; I may be allowed to observe, especially since he has advanced nothing to the contrary but his own strong Asseverations, destitute of Proof, That had he a little more Knowledge with his Zeal, or a little better considered the Nature and Reason of moral Things, or Fitness of Things in their Connexion and Tendencies, he had probably been of another Mind, and never have lost his time in writing new Inconsistencies, or repeating old Absurdities.

3. THE Reader without any Item given him, must necessarily observe, and be surpriz'd with a
New

New Specimen of Writing in the *Moral* and *Philosophic* Kind. When new Things are offer'd, or old stale ones retail'd to the candid Reader, it is usual to express some Diffidence, or offer at some Apology; but this is so very much in the *Tbrafonical* Mood and Figure, tho' upon the most serious and important Subject in all the World, *viz.* what is the only true Religion, or, in other Words, what is the only true Christianity, that it can't escape being observed as remarkably heterogenous to the Subject. After heaping up a vast Multitude of gracious Names upon his Adversaries and their Tenets, for 450 Pages together (who are in truth, not the Clergy only, but the most Pious, the most Learned, the most Honourable of every Denomination of *Protestant* Christendom, and thither I suppose he would confine the Debate) such as *Judaism, Superstition, Enthusiasm, Ignorance, &c.* &c. And after throwing out some singular Darts of his Spleen against the *Clergy* of that, and every Distinction with all his Spite, with the utmost of his slaying Force, allowing their well weighed and long tried *Protestant* Reasoning upon Jesus Christ and his holy saving Religion, with respect to his being a Propitiation for our Sins, and a Mediator of Redemption and Intercession for reconciling God to Man, as well as Man to God, no better Quarter than *Raving**, I can answer for myself, and may venture to do so for the rest of my Brethren (if I might have the Honour to speak for them) that we are ready to turn the other Cheek, and take a fresh Rap of his Reproach, sooner than return opprobrious Language, or any one of his base, low-

* Page 215.

bred,

bred, virulent Epithets, *Entbusiaſtick Pulpiteers, Theologafter, Syſtem Mongers, Superſtitious, Ignorant, Impoſtors, Cheats, Hypocrites*; that the clerical Religion is a *Thimble and Button, or Powder le Pimp**; to oblige a Man in *Preaching* to talk *Senſe*, would be the moſt unreaſonable Nonſenſe†; that the Belief or Uſe of the *inſtituted Means, poſitive Parts or Doctrines* of Chriſtianity, is the *Clerical or Sacerdotal Chriſtianity* or reveal'd Religion‡; and in this inſtituted, political Religion of the Hierarchy, there is no Diſtinction of Clergy, or, they are ſcarcely diſtinguiſhable ||, with much more of the like abuſive Strain which adorns our *Moral Philoſopher*, in his immoral profligate Libel againſt them, and real Chriſtianity.

PRAY, Brother Chriſtian, as you love to call yourſelf, why ſo very deſtitute of Temper, Meekneſs, and Moderation, the very Spirit and Ornament of that Religion you pretend to? Does the *Wrath of Man indeed work the Righteouſneſs of God*? Is that your way of reading our Text? You give out “no Doubt but many “large elaborate Volumes will be written, and “a thouſand Sermons preach'd againſt this your “Book, in which my Adverſaries, (they are your own Words) “eſpecially the Judaizing “Part of the Clergy (by whom you mean all who retain the Notion of Jeſus Chriſt being an Atonement, Sacrifice, Propitiation for Sins, or the Mediator of Redemption, and Interceſſion for Mankind) “will clearly and triumphantly “confute all that I have ſaid, without anſwering

* Page 95. † Page 119. ‡ Page 117. || Page 94.
“ any

“any one Objection.”* But it is you, Sir, who write in the *triumphant Style*, and perhaps in bravado Terms, not to be met with out of the Precincts of the *Bear-garden*; the Learned there, beſt know whether it is according to the Laws of Heroiſm to challenge *Ravers* and Madmen, ſuch as pretend to confute a Man without anſwering any one Objection, or beat him ſoundly without giving one blow; and yet in the very next Page you ſay, “You ſhould rejoice “to ſee ſuch Adverſaries (that can cope with “you) among the Hierarchal Men, or Judaizing Part of the Clergy; and if God will “ſpare my Life ’till he has rais’d them up, I “ſhould deſire in this World no greater Bleſſing.” How much this is the menacing Elocution of the Gentry of the ſame Place, I leave others to ſay, and give their Opinion likewise, whether even the Braveſt there are apt to brag the moſt, or who they are that generally come off with the worſt: It is already decided againſt himſelf, if I may be permitted the Words of our mighty *Goliath*, “You may eaſily perceive, “that our greateſt Talkers, and moſt *poſitive* “Deciders, never think at all.”† It is well (whiſt I put the Negative upon myſelf) if ſome little *David* of the Deſpiſed Clergy does not compleatly demolish this vain Conqueror, and by the ſame Aſſiſtance, and for the ſame Reaſon, becauſe he deſies the Divine Scheme and Apparatus of *the living God reconciling the World to himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt*.

BUT I forget myſelf, a new ſet up Oracle has the Privilege of dictating and being be-

* Page 357. † Page 356.

lieved

lieved upon his own Word, as if Christianity was to stand or fall by what he says *pro* or *con*, and can have no other Chance to be this, or that, or t'other, but just as his Authority, against all other Authority, interprets and determines. Towards the Conclusion, he triumphantly foretells and pronounces out of his infallible Chair, the Spread of Deism*, and echoes to, and will make good, as far as he is able, *Theophanes's* Observations in the Beginning. "Had this "Malady of *Deism* only infected our Rakes and "pretty Fellows, Men of little Sense and less "Virtue, it would not have much affected "me; but the Sore lies deeper, and the Malignity seems to spread itself thro' the whole "Body, among Persons of all Ranks, Qualities, and Characters," &c. † But while he is labouring his pernicious Point to overthrow the Holy Scriptures, the Oracles of the living God, he is supporting the Truth of them by fulfilling what they have foretold, That in the latter Day, there should come Scoffers, denying the Lord that bought them. Still I trust in God, and the common Reason of his Readers, that they will not be so complaisant as to give up their Senses, together with the common obvious way of understanding all Writings, for the Sake of the strange, violent, whimsical, inconsistent Meaning he would impose upon them; especially, since the literal obvious Sense which he detests and runs away from, is shewn against all his Fallacies, to be perfectly consistent with the greatest Honour of God, and Good of Men, and the Moral Truth and Reason of Things.

* Page 434.

† Page 14.

I, who,

I, who have lived much in the Country, and so far from *London*, and Opportunity of seeing New Books, must own myself a Stranger to other Writings of this extraordinary Pen, and therefore can't tell whether this positive magisterial Method is his usual, Constitutional way of Writing upon every Subject; if so, he seems to be resolved upon engrossing Infallibility to himself, and allowing no Body whatsoever to be in the Right, who has the Misfortune to differ from him in Opinion, in any thing. But he is inconsistent with himself in shewing so much Arrogance, and absolute Contempt of his Adversaries in the *Body* of his Book, and yet in his *Preface*, putting on some Modesty and Respect to other Persons Judgment; as these are two very different Appearances of the same Person, I am willing to look upon the most favourable, and believe, that his prefix'd love of Truth, will at length prevail over him to relax from his Positiveness, and relinquish that Peremptoriness, which he can, to be sure, ill bear in other Writers; and dispose him to submit willingly to be overcome with the Revenge of calm Reasoning, and sound Argument, without aiming at the vainest of all Vanities, I mean, the common Stage Prize, *the Honour of the last Word*: Unhappy Disgrace of Controversy, and instructive Debate about Truth, arising from any unpersuadable Litigant dealing in many Words! for towards his Conclusion, he appears to be of that very Temper by the Obstinacy of his Style, "That the Point can never be "settled, nor the religious Peace of Mankind "ever establish'd upon a rational Foundation, "as long as the Necessity or Fundamentality
Vol. II. B "of

“ of such mere positive Laws and Institutes
 “ shall be allow’d at all.”* This seems to be
 a determined Resolution to banish Christianity
 (as far as his Pen can contribute to it) out of
 the World, with its three great, divine, holy In-
 stitutes, which are so positively appointed, *Bap-
 tism*, the *Lord’s Supper*, and the Worship of God
thro’ the Mediator Jesus Christ, its peculiar Glory
 and Distinction, to the greatest Honour of God,
 and to the highest Benefit and Comfort of Men,
 let *who will* offer to protect, or make any Apolo-
 gy for it: nay, notwithstanding those *Positives*
 appear to all *other* reasonable Men to be pur-
 posely calculated and ordain’d from Heaven as the
 best Means in the World for improving in, and
 carrying on the Moral Law of Righteousness to
 the highest Human Perfection; and that they
 have a rational, moral Connexion with, and a real
 efficacious Tendency to that End, as Experience
 testifies, where-ever there are any real serious
 Christians to be found; and consequently wor-
 thy both of the Name, and of an universal Re-
 ception, as a *Reasonable Service*, the most desira-
 ble, perpetual, and only true Religion that can
 be propounded to the World, by degrees, or
 settled at last firmly in it: yet to him *solely* it
 shall appear, by himself *singly* it shall be ac-
 counted as the Reverse, be construed, be mis-
 represented and traduced, as having no such
 tendency, *Pag.* 177, and throughout his Book.
 But tho’ he appears resolutely and inflexibly
 bent upon his inglorious Point against common
 Conviction, and the clearest and strongest Ar-
 gument to the contrary, still I hope he will at
 length, relent of this Temper, and rather than

* Page 444.

put

put out the Eyes of every body for seeing dif-
 ferently from himself, begin to think there
 must be some Fault in his own.

THESE are *some* of the *Nostrums* of our great
 Religion-Mender; more might be mention’d,
 had I compass for it in this Place. He is in
 perfect Harmony with the two Oracles of De-
 ism I have confuted, in exploding and ri-
 diculing *Miracles* * as any Proof of Reli-
 gion coming from God; that *Prophecy* is as
 little to be given in for Evidence of Doc-
 trines †, that they are no more than fortunate,
 human Conjectures, a kind of Fortune-telling
 supported upon Trick and Cunning for selfish
 Views ‡.

HE agrees with them in disallowing any well
 attested Revelation, whilst he is somewhat sin-
 gular (unless you will range him with the *Qua-
 kers*) in requiring it to be *Personal* to every
 Man ||, whilst every Reader will be ready to do
 justice, in affirming that this Author is not pecu-
 liar, but of one Heart and the same Soul with
 the rest of his Brethren, in laboriously repeat-
 ing and repeating, printing and reprinting the
 same confuted Stuff, without taking the least
 Notice of *any* Answer. What sort of a Cause
 that is, and with how much Honour and Inge-
 nuity the Defenders of it abound, must be left
 to the Publick. I may venture to commend,
 or rather blame him, for his Masterly Skill in
 the *Socinian* Subtleties: but where is the Glory
 or Sense of playing that *bocus pocus* Game over-

* Page 81, 92, 3, 28, 411. † Page 333. ‡ Page 165,
 289, 305. || Page 89.

B 2

again?

again? For there will be the full Belief and a full Confidence in the reality of Motion, be the Arguments never so subtle or seemingly convincing against it; so, be there never so many *Figures, Allegories, &c.* lurking in the Fingers of the *Socinians*, to spirit away the Common Sense of so many, so very many plain Words, and Sentences, and Paragraphs of Revelation, which disagree with, and are not well-affected to their Scheme; still there will be Common Sense, and Apprehension of Words left in great abundance to stand ground, and not be baffled out of one's Senses by such refined Absurdities. I am afraid therefore, that whoever goes about to add to the Subtlety of our Author's Head, will, at the same time, take away a great deal from the Integrity of his Heart, which he should not thank any body for.

BUT so it is, I am sorry to observe, for the sake of so ingenious a Person, what can't escape general Observation, That much the greatest Part of this elaborate Work consists of, and swells itself up with those egregious *Repetitions*, baffled Attacks, stale, dissipated Objections; and, I must add further, tho' the chief Merit of it appears to be of that sort, I can't do him the Pleasure of answering him in particular as to those Matters, for two good Reasons: because I have already pretty largely, and very lately, answered his Accomplices in the same way of Thinking, and Reasoning; and because a much greater Person than himself, the *Publick*, might justly be displeased with the repetition of Arguments unanswer'd, and wholly declined by this famous Antagonist, tho' they enter into the very Heart of the Cause he espouses. However I shall

I shall endeavour to gratify him with all that is needful, or can be thought proper, in this present Reply, by addressing myself to what new Strength, he may think, he has added to old Arguments, or the greater Light of seeming Truth, he supposes, he has projected upon, and recommended his beloved Subject under: and this I shall do where-ever he advances any thing, which I judge does directly appertain unto, or immediately affect the Merits of the Cause in debate.

IT is obvious to every cursory Reader, that he is Hand in Glove with the Two celebrated Authors I have answered, in making the Christian Revelation to be neither more nor less than the *Republication* of the Law of Nature; in maintaining, that *Jesus Christ* died only as a *Martyr, Witness, or Example*; that the *Positive instituted* Parts of the Religion called Christians, are senseless wretched Things, having not the least rational Use, Fitness, or Moral Tendency in them; fit for nothing but to be exploded as Nonsense, and cashier'd as Priestcraft: And he is so closely link'd with them in his Affection to the *Clergy*, that he can't find Words bad enough for them. But as there happens to be some new Turn now and then in the Process of his Assertions, or something observably bright or smart in the Management of his Argument, or Elucidation of his Point, he might think himself neglected, if I did not likewise take some Notice of his Club or Share in the pious Design that has been so long in hand.

IN consequence of professing himself a *Christian* Deist, he declares, "I must therefore
B 3 " take

"take Christianity, as to the Substance and doctrinal Parts of it, to be a Revival of the Religion of Nature."* He had declared for *Jesus Christ* before †, and through his Book owns him in no other Character but that of a *Prophet*, or what is necessarily included therein; as he proclaims every where, that he died only as a Martyr, and Witness to Truth, Example of Moral Righteousness, he particularly adds, "That all that was done or suffered by him was necessary to *himself*, and upon his *own Account*." ‡ "That the Sufferings and Death of Christ, as a propitiatory Sacrifice for Sin, is not as the *meritorious Cause*, but as the *moral effective Means* of our Salvation and Recovery, &c." || This is his figurative allegorical Sacrifice, Propitiation, &c. and all other Sense is absurd Raving not Reasoning: and elsewhere, speaking the Sense of such Christians as himself, "That the Death of Christ, as an Atonement or Propitiation in the proper Sense is absurd, impossible, and contrary to the Nature of God, to the Nature of Man, and to the necessary Reason, and Moral Fitness of Things."** And frequently loads the commonly receiv'd Christian Scheme, as the Dregs of Judaism ††, Enthusiasm and Superstition. That the Christians (whom he therefore every where brands by the Name of *Judaizing Christians*) learn'd the Trick and Cheat of Propitiation, Atonement, Sacrifice, from the *Jewish Priests*, who learnt it from the *Egyptians*. To quote Passages relating to this last, would be in Effect to cite half his Book.

* Page 392. † Page 358. ‡ Page 153, 4.
|| Page 228. ** Page 95. †† Page 200.

At

At last he triumphantly concludes with respect to "the Doctrine of Christ's Satisfaction, or the Necessity of his Death, as a Propitiation for Sin, and the principal Ground of our Acceptance with God, he has said enough to subvert and destroy this Hypothesis, under *all the Appearances and Constructions* of it, among the several Schematists and Faith Mongers*."

BUT if *Example* is all the *saving* Virtue of Christ dying for the Sins of *the World*, What a miserable short Scheme of Salvation and Redemption is this? Every Mother's Son of the many past, present, or future Generations of Men who have, do, or shall not learn and copy this salutiferous Example, are lost and undone; Sincerity in doing their best to please God in the Circumstances they are placed under, can stand them in no stead. Is this stingy Representation of God's Wisdom, Goodness, and Love of the World, reasoning rightly upon either of them, or depreciating and reproaching all and every of them in a shameful Manner? The Deistical Projects of Salvation used to be more liberal to the *Goodness* of God at least; What is the Meaning then of this sudden Alteration, for the worse, in our present Projector? Though nothing can be plainer from innumerable Places that he means nothing by the Death of Christ, but as an Example, Martyr or Witness to the Truth, yet, excluding all other Benefits of his Death and Passion, he has the Assurance to insult and deride the rich Favour and superabounding Love of God to Mankind, in that Dispensation of *Jesus Christ*, in whom we have *Redemption* through

* Page 444.

B 4.

bis

his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace; his Explanation of which Words are, "In or by whom, *i. e.* by Jesus Christ, in consequence of his perfect Obedience unto Death, we are *redeem'd* or *delivered* from the Dominion and Condemnation of Sin, by the rich Favour and superabounding Love of God, as manifested to Mankind by his Son Christ in the Gospel *." And to make it the more impossible for any *other* Benefit to derive upon Mankind, he asserts very roundly, "That all that was done or suffered by him was necessary to himself, and upon his *own Account* †." In defiance of the Scripture Account, which never once intimates that he died for himself, or on his own Account, but always, and every where expresses it, that he died *for us*, *the Just for the Unjust*, &c. by way of *Atonement*, *Propitiation*, &c.

In order to contravene this commonly received Doctrine, and undermine the general Hope and Faith of Christians, he proceeds by two Methods, *first*, by changing and resolving the literal Meaning of Scriptural Expressions into a figurative foreign Sense: *Secondly*, by offering at some Reasons, such as they are.

I. HE maintains that *Propitiation*, *Atonement*, *Purchase*, *Ransom*, *Price of Redemption*, &c. are all figurative Expressions, Metaphors, and Allegories ‡. But surely all Mankind must allow in all serious Writings, that the literal Sense is the most obvious, and the first that presents, and ought

* Page 123, 124.
161, 229. and other Places.

† Page 153, 154.

‡ Page

therefore

therefore constantly to be receiv'd and maintain'd in Interpretation as true and undoubted, unless very good Reasons appear to the contrary, such as are allowed by all wise Men to decide between, and give the Preference to the *Letter*, or the *Figure*. But in such Writings the former always keeps its Place of the latter, unless there is some Contradiction implied to the Attributes of God, natural or moral; to the eternal Distinction of Good and Evil; or the Nature of Things: If nothing of this is the Case (and that it is not the Case, will be seen under the Head of his *Reasons*) then the literal Sense is intitled to an universal Reception, not only because of its first common *presumptive* Right of being the true Design of the Writer, but because, in equity also, there is no exception as to its being disagreeable to any other Truth.

WITH respect to this unfair *Socinian* Liberty of interpreting Scripture, the Words of that great Reasoner Archbishop *Tillotson*, are remarkable, "There is no end of Wit and Fancy, which can turn any thing any way, and can make whatever they please to be the Meaning of any *Book*, though never so contrary to the plain Design of it, and to that Sense, which at the first Hearing and reading of it, is obvious to every Man's common Sense *." He had before call'd it violent, strained, wonderful and incredible, and adds presently after, "That no Doctrine whatsoever can have any Foundation in any Book, if this Liberty [of Figure and Allegory] be allowed.

* *Tillotson's Works*, Folio, Vol. I. Page 421.

Is

Is it not a very hard Case with Scripture? That this Author, who by his assumed Privilege of *double Intender* in interpreting the Old Testament*, can readily make any thing of Scripture, and as he affirms the *literal* Sense absurd, and the *allegorical* the only rational one†; and as the famous Author of the *Grounds*, &c. on the contrary affirms, the *allegorical figurative* Interpretation to be the absurd Sense; both these Evidences (deep Reasoners as they would be esteemed) agree in one common Design, 'tis true, against Christianity, but then the *Witnesses* should agree a little better together, and not contradict one another, before any Credit should be given to either of them. But as this *singular* Evidence against it, neither shews Wit, nor Consistency, in bungling and jumbling the literal Fact and Metaphor together, *those Quakers* must be allowed to outstrip him in both, who carry the Metaphor *througbout*, making both the Death and Resurrection of Christ to be no more than *allegorical*. He is very liberal with his dignifying Appellation *Enthusiast*, upon those Christians who embrace the literal Sense, but he ought to consider, whether the general distinguish'd Characteristick of an Enthusiast from a sober Thinker, is not taken from his Affectation and Addictedness in turning the plain literal Sense of Divine Scripture into Figure and Allegory; not being contented to be acted by Religion, and submit to the plain Meaning of Words, but he must needs actuate Religion, and impose a new Sense, that he may strike out a new Religion; how far this fits our Author is left to others to give their Opinion.

* Page 249.

† Page 157.

BESIDES

BESIDES it is literally true and plain, that if the Sentiment of Christ dying as a *Martyr* to the Truth of his Doctrine, or the *figurative* Evasion of his dying a Sacrifice, Propitiation and Atonement had obtain'd in the apostolical Times, how could it be truly alledged with regard to *Jew and Greek*; that his Death was a stumbling Block to one, and foolishness to the other?

II. HE offers at some Reasons in support of his Opinion, which I might proceed to consider with respect to what he says, that the Death of Christ as an Atonement or Propitiation in the proper Sense "is absurd, impossible, and contrary to the Nature of God, to the Nature of Man, and to the necessary Reason, and moral Fiteness of Things." But I may be excused from answering in this Place, having so copiously done it in the two preceding Volumes. Wherein is shewn the most perfect Harmony between Rectoral Justice and Mercy, and all the Divine Attributes and Perfections; how much they are all adorned, illustrated, and recommended to the Love, Fear, and Adoration of Mankind; where it appears, that Remission of the Penalty upon sufficient Satisfaction (if he will have it called so) is an Act of Justice, in a different and truer Sense than he represents*, it being the Performance of a *Promise* to those who embrace the Covenant, and claim the *Justice* of Promise, without any need of mentioning *Equivalents*, and, at the same time, though in a different Respect, is an Act of *Grace*, by preferring that Method of

* Page 148, 149.

forgiving,

forgiving, which is most *favourable* to the Sinner: How admirably also Human Nature is consulted in its lapsed, peccant Condition, its Repentance and Devotion effectually relieved and comforted in its guilty Fears, and every Thing restor'd, better'd, and exalted by that wonderful Dispensation. Consequently, if so entirely suitable to the Nature of God, and Man, it must of Course be so to the Reason, and moral Fitness of Things.

1. ONE Reason he *particularly* gives in against the received Doctrine and current Sense of Scripture is, because *Merit* and *Demerit* can't be communicated; and consequently there can be no such thing as *redundant Merit*, *imputed Righteousness*, *vicarious Obedience*, or *meritorious Cause* of Man's Redemption. However common and agreeable to the Usage of Human Governments, is the Communication both of Merit, and Demerit, with respect to the *Heads* of Families, who have deserved well or ill of the Publick and its supreme Governor; and how much soever the Communication of the latter may be called in Question, as impeaching the Justice of God, and narrowing and pinching upon his Goodness; still as his Goodness rejoices over his Justice, and loves to impart its compassionate Regards to our Race, as far as can consist with the Honour of his Laws, and the Dignity of his Government, why should that glorious Attribute, on which we so much depend, be stinted of its holy and wise Overtures, or be debar'd and block'd up by our Author from its reviving Communications that way, to the unspeakable Damage and Discomfort of the World? Is he possessed with any Melancholy that

that disposes him to revile and disparage the Divine Grace, and envy the Good of Mankind? For the Thing is uncontestably certain, felt and confess'd by the Experience of all Men, the Heathens themselves, that we do not, cannot, with all our Care in our present lapsed State, exactly and fully perform the Law of Righteousness written on our Hearts; and if it is no less certain, That that Law, and the Honour of God exact that Obedience from us, and upon the Failure subject us to Condemnation. Had there never been so much as *one* partaking of Human Nature, to perform this adequate Obedience, and *fulfil all* Righteousness, then that Law must necessarily be broken by every Body, and at all times, and *not one* Son of Man found to perform and do that compleat Righteousness, which he is conscious is his bounden Duty; and God must stand by and see himself dishonoured and disobeyed *universally*, and his holy Law contaminated and trod under Foot by *every* Person upon Earth without *Exception*. But this horrid Imputation upon the Holiness of the Divine Governor is saved and prevented, if one mighty to save interposes in *our Nature*, descends upon our Earth, and undertakes the obliging Task of performing, not what Man is capable of performing in common Human Sincerity, balanc'd, as it must always be, with the Frailty of Human Condition, and the violent Strength of Temptation occasionally besetting it; but what the Agent very well knows in his Conscience, he *cannot* discharge with all his Care, and with all his Sincerity added to that; in that Circumstance too well known to be denied, is it not a Divine and Heroick Kindness in the Son of God, to offer his own perfect Obedience in our Stead; and no less gracious in God

the Father to accept it, in Commiseration of the unfortunate State of the Descendants of the first Adam?

THERE is therefore a Necessity of admitting vicarious Obedience, imputed Righteousness, Communication of Merit, meritorious Cause; which may be done with all Honour and Justice, and without any Injury to any Party concerned, Governor or governed, in order to balance, explain, and moderate the Necessity of an adequate unfinning Obedience due from Man; of which, through Misfortune, not personally his own Mismanagement, he does not, cannot acquit himself of, alone. It must consequently be as agreeable to *moral Truth and Requitude*, that there should be redundant Merit * for supplying *that way*, what Man is incompetent for, as that it should ever be so, for God to require such Obedience, or, in the Course of Divine Providence, that it should become impracticable for Man to conform to it. How reasonable then in Divine Goodness and Mercy, and upon that Account, credible to Belief is it, That the *second Adam* should much more exceed in Advantages and adventitious Favours to the Human Race, than the first had it in his Power to incommode or postpone us with respect to the Favour of his, and our Maker.

2. ANOTHER Reason why he is so much set against the common Opinion of Propitiation, and Atonement is, because, as he imagines, it is "Supporting Iniquity with Grace †," or as he elsewhere in more Places than one ‡, expresses

* Page 9.

† Page 170.

‡ Page 146.

himself, because such a Doctrine is "a strong " Hold for Sin and Satan." But this is a gross Mistake of his own, if not a wilful perverting of the Faith. Is it not very strange, that the strong Expressions of St. Paul in this, and the foregoing Article, should not be able to set him to rights, especially since he shews so much deference to him, in particular, as to esteem him "a better Casuist and Expounder of the Doctrines of Christ, and of the true Nature, Genius, and Design of Christianity, than all the rest put together *?" Yet it is notorious, that he puts *the God forbid* upon any such subversive Inference, or Supposition of that Kind. If any Christians flatter themselves with the Hopes of Salvation upon easier Terms than they ought, or indeed upon any Terms short of the End and Design of Christianity, teaching them to *deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World*, they are certainly mistaken and misinform'd. For the Christian Repentance and Pardon is no manner of Encouragement to Sin; nothing can be plainer than that Pardon is declared, and Satisfaction made for *repented* Sins, and no other, (though he insinuates the contrary †) and that supposes time for perfecting the begun Repentance. He allows the "good Effect of Repentance, is to lessen the Number of Mens Sins, and encrease the Weight and Value of their good Actions in the Day of Account ‡." Now what is the Use of *Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ*, but to hasten and perfect our *Repentance towards God*? With respect to *Repentance*, (I might add also *Prayers*, both of them being the

* Page 331.

† Page 149.

‡ Page 275.

natural Religion of the *Means* for performing the Law of Nature, the Religion of the End) he says "all Revelation must suppose Reason, and "be founded in it, and cannot make any thing "fit, and reasonable, that was not so before *." Now the Christian Revelation supposes this Duty fit and reasonable, the very Voice and Law of God, Nature, and Reason, yet in Commiseration, that it was dead and perish'd out of the World, the Revelation of *Jesus Christ* presents itself to the World lying in Wickedness, in Aid of that Duty, for the better quickening and enlivening it, not to connive at any Sin, but to forsake every kind universally, with all haste and hatred; if the Knowledge, or rather some *Assurance* of God's Readiness to forgive after infinite Provocations from Man, is necessary to his Repentance, and if God's Method of assuring the World of that, by the Death of Christ, has a moral Tendency and an influential Power, not only for raising up Repentance from the Dead, but for animating it with Vigour, and pushing that Vigour on to Production of goodly Fruits mete for it, it must be confessed that the *Knowledge* of Jesus Christ suffering and dying for penitent Sinners, is the greatest Service that can be done to Repentance, as well as the most inestimable Blessing to that part of Mankind, to whom it is revealed. It cannot therefore be an indifferent thing to this Duty, nor to Man, whether *Christ* had suffered or not, as this Author supposes †; seeing it is in itself, in the proper and grateful Reflections made thereupon, efficacious in promoting the same. Not necessary in order to *enable* God, as he falsely argues,

* Page 212.

† Page 149.

to pardon Sin, but necessary, because it *became* him to forgive it in that manner, and that only. Nor is that way of remitting Sins any manner of Support of Unrighteousness, or the least Privilege to Iniquity; because Obedience to the moral Law of Righteousness, is not superseded, but advanced, nor is there any Pardon by Christ to any wilful Sinner as long as he continues such. Every Christian's personal Righteousness is as necessary to join Christ's Righteousness in doing what he can, as the Righteousness of Christ is to join his for supplying what he cannot, in order to a Fulfilment of the Law, for our Justification before God: That Righteousness of his is therefore by way of Transfer to the diligent Seekers of God, and Followers of the *Holy Jesus*, called *our* Righteousness, and to all that join or use their own best Endeavours, he is a complete Redeemer; but to those who refuse them, wheresoever dispersed, whether they know Christ, or whether they never heard of him, he is no Saviour at all.

It is surprizing that this accute Author should actually suffer his own Scheme to lie under the real Imputation of being a *strong Hold for Sin and Satan*, whilst he falsely lays it at the Door of common Christianity *. He maintains, that "this "general Pardon, Act of Grace, or Indemnity "for all past Sins, was never intended to be extended farther (confined to the Sins committed under either the *Jewish* or the *Pagan* "State †,) so as to take in all, or any wilful "presumptuous Sins committed under the Gospel Dispensation itself, after Men had sworn

* Page 170.

† Page 172.

“ themselves to Christ, by Baptism or publick
 “ Profession, and thereby engaged themselves
 “ in the Christian Covenant,” and this he would
 endeavour to support from *Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. x. 26.*
 both which Places are understood by all the best
 Interpreters of Apostacy from the *Faith*, as well
 as Practice of Christianity. But this dismal,
 disconsolate, unnatural System of his in allowing,
 with some Hereticks of old, no Repentance *af-*
ter Baptism, necessarily drives Men to *Despair*, and
 that to be sure is not only a Sin, but *the* strong
 Hold of Sin and Satan: This is a dreadful Blaft
 of his, not God’s Displeasure against lapsed,
 compassionate Human Nature. I have heard
 from him of *Jewish* Christianity, and *Deistical*
 Christianity, but this is the most horrible Christi-
 nity of all, it is so cruel and inhuman, and
 yet it is his own new Christianity, fresh wrought
 out of his own Brains. What must become
 of frail, unconstant Human Nature at this
 rate, sincerely beginning its Repentance, and
 sincerely striving against its Sins, the perfect
 Mastery of which is a Work of Time, and
 the good Effect of Habit in Virtue, which, by
 Degrees only, inures to Constancy in Duty?
 Is there no return to Duty after a Relapse, so in-
 cident to fresh Beginners in a virtuous Course,
 nor any Recovery or Hope of Reconciliation
 after a Presumptuous Sin? I thought the Hazard
 of such Sins was, not absolute Despair, but as
 the *Psalmist* describes, *lest they get the Dominion*
over me.

GROTIUS, *Hamond*, *Stillington*, may con-
 sequently be in the right, and their System not
 compacted of Iron and Clay, as he falsely al-
 ledges,

ledges*, but seems to have its Parts regularly
 called, and intimately united together; since
 they equally consult (what must be be equally
 provided for in any true System of Religion)
 the Honour of God, and the Frailty of Man,
 and harmonies to both of them, in the most sur-
 prizing Manner: Whilst his new invented one
 having little or no regard to either, must appear
 to the present Generation, and Posterity, (if it
 reaches so far,) the greatest Botch and Bungle,
 and Discord within itself, and Discouragement to
 all who serve God, that ever was offer’d to the
 World, because it tends in every Christian Coun-
 try to overwhelm every Sinner with Despair,
 instead of recovering him from the Error of his
 Ways. Are you, Mr. *Moral Philosopher*, that
 perfect Man, as to need no Repentance? — It
 does not appear that you are, because you so
 little observe the Decorum, and so very much
 neglect the Characteristick of *such* a Person in
 bridling your publick Tongue, your Pen, no
 better than you do. But what is stranger, in
 your Philosopher’s Prayer †, there is no ask-
 ing Pardon for Sin, nor confessing himself an
 actual Sinner, but *if I should err from the Way*
of Truth; and though you make him profess
 his Dependance upon God, you are ungrateful
 in shutting out all Thanksgiving from his De-
 votions for Mercies received; and it might bet-
 ter have become a moral Philosopher, so well
 acquainted with Revelation, and the Origin of
 Evil (not denied in other Places ‡,) to have ac-
 knowledged the Depravity of Human Nature
 more explicitly. So that in lieu of bringing a
 true Accusation against those great Men “ *that*

* Page 158. † Page 426. ‡ Page 231, 2.

"they don't think at all," you have bestow'd wretched Self-accusing Pains upon yourself, in giving the World a Demonstration how void of Thought is the Compiler of your Book, and of Truth the Composition. And what a pitiful inconsistent Declaration do you draw up against the vanishing and almost vanish'd rigid Calvinists, when at the same time you acknowledge they are better than their Principles, and are not influenc'd by them in Practice *?

3. ANOTHER particular Reason why the Death of Christ, as a propitiatory Sacrifice for Sin, is not a meritorious Cause is, because it is a "moral effective Means of our Salvation and Recovery" as above cited. A very short Answer may suffice to this, because it will better fall under the Consideration of Means afterwards. I am glad in the mean time that our Author admits the Death of Christ to be a moral and effectual Means of Salvation, in any Sense. All the Difference betwixt him and me is, which is most effectual, and consequently the most moral Means, his Notion of *Example singly*, or the common laudable Opinion, by way of *grateful Remembrance*, what he has suffered upon our Account in Propitiation to his and our Father (not in Satisfaction to Himself, as he grossly misrepresents †) join'd to his Divine Example. The moral Efficacy of this last I acknowledge; and must believe it will be confess'd by others also to be as inferior to, and defective of Virtue and moral Efficacy in respect to the other, as a Part is to the Whole.

* Page 218.

† Page 159.

4. A fourth

4. A fourth Reason for our Author's singular Opinion is, "That St. Paul always by *Works*, or the *Works of the Law*, means the external Ritual, and carnal Institutions of the *Mosaic Law*, whenever he excludes them from any Share or Concern in the Business of *Salvation and Justification before God*," * which supposes, agreeably to his System, that the Works of the *Moral Law* might be, and are sufficient, of themselves, for Justification before God. But nothing can well be plainer from that Apostle's writings (which he pleasantly magnifies in order to nothing else seemingly, but almost every where to contradict his great Patron in Christianity with the superior Authority of his own greater *self*) than that the *Gentile* is concluded under Sin, as well as the *Jew*, that one was as much subject to Condemnation, and guilty of Sin with respect to the Law that he was under, as the other; that neither of them could be counted Righteous before God by the Observance of the Law they were respectively subject to; not the *Gentile* by the Moral Law; nor yet the *Jew* by his Ritual Law added to that; and comprehensively as well of the *Gentiles* as of the *Jews*, and of the Law of those, as much as of these according to the Tenor of his Arguments, and the Design of his Writings upon that Subject, his Conclusion holds good, that by the Works of the Law *no Flesh* can be justified, or in the Words of the *Psalms*, in his Sight *no Man living*. That God is the *Justifier both of the Circumcision and Uncircumcision*, and by one and

* Page 406.

the same Method, as it follows, and that is *by Faith*; that Justification consists in *Remission of Sins*, or which is the same thing in other Words, *not imputing them*. That the Remission of Sins was the *very end* of Christ's Blood being shed; that both *Jew and Gentile* are *justified by his Blood*, and *have Peace made for them by the Blood of his Cross*. These, with other equivalent Expressions, are such known Maxims and Characteristicks of the Gospel laid down and contended for by this Apostle, as the Religion of the Means for carrying on Repentance and Devotion toward God, for sober, righteous, and godly living, that they occur to every Reader. *Abraham* was justified, and had his Sins remitted, by an active Faith in God's *Promise*, believing in *Him* of his Seed who should come after, in whom all Nations of the Earth were to be *blessed*, have their Sins forgiven, or not imputed. *Socrates* seeking God, panting after Revelation, and doing his best to please him, may be justified, and his Transgressions cover'd by the Blood of his *unknown* Redeemer; but it is to be fear'd, our *Modern Moral Philosopher* runs great hazard of being condemn'd by that *Lord and Judge*, in whose Name, and through whose Blood Remission of Sins and eternal Life are only given, declar'd, and granted of God in the Letter and plain Meaning of those Scriptures in his hands? for his spurning, notwithstanding all *real* Sacrifice, intelligible Propitiation; obvious Atonement in the shedding thereof; and for his embracing, and teaching nothing more than the *Exemplar* of it, expunging every thing else, and thereby endeavouring to pervert, degrade, and supersede the common Faith in Christ as a *true*

Saviour, Mediator of Redemption and Intercession for the World; bringing him even down to the Level of *Socrates*, and making him a Friend to Mankind in no higher Degree above him, than in being a more perfect Example in performing the Moral Law of Righteousness with greater exactness.

5. ANOTHER main Reason of his wild Opinion, excentrick both to Reason and Scripture, is, the Process at the Day of Judgment, "That God in the last Day will reward every Man according to his Works, or according to the Deeds done in the Body, whether they have been morally good or well." * This Concession that God is no respecter of Persons, but in every Nation and Age, he that feareth him and worketh Righteousness shall be accepted of him, whether he has lived under the Gospel or not, he makes the Basis of his Debate; and "the great Rule of Judgment which God will proceed upon with all Mankind in the last Days, he constitutes a certain infallible Criterion, whereby to distinguish between Superstition and Religion, or which is the same Thing, between true and false Religion." † But it is not, neither can it be any Question, Whether the Religion of the End, the Moral Law, or Religion of Nature, is true Religion or not, all are agreed in it; the sole Doubt, the whole Debate and Subject of Inquiry is therefore concerning the Religion of the Means, which is the True and the False, and how, and wherein one differs from the other. Now the Criterion of that, can only be taken from the *Tendency*, or *Repug-*

* Page 146.

† Page 198.

nancy of the Means in Question, for promoting or hindering the other. Why the final Judgment proceeds upon the Religion of the End, see the *Index* of my Book *Judgment*. I have shewn that Proceeding does not supersede, but supposes the Religion of the Means, seeing the Head of all of the Means is then the Judge, and the Judge also of the Knowledge and Revelation of them all the World over. But what signifies erecting a Tribunal upon the Means, when the End is unaccomplish'd by the Knowledge of them? That would be only encreasing Damnation which is deep enough without it; but for not receiving the Means, the *Belief of Himself* including in it all the rest, where offered, and as he offers to Belief, in order to that End, the same Judge we know elsewhere, awards Damnation; where the End happens to be performed by some few, without the explicit Knowledge of the best Means, diligently seeking to please God in their Opportunities, and with the Sincerity of their Hearts, there to omit mention of the Means, is to add to the Glory of the Performer; so that it seems superfluous either way to bring them to Account. The Means are supposed to have so great a Love to the End (to be sure the Head of the Means overflows with it) that it is generously above their Notice, where, and whenever the End is found to be pursued and practiced; and equally beneath their Notice, when it is not. But is it not very remarkable, that seeing our Author makes the whole *Means*, and all the *Virtue* of Christ to consist in his *Example*, that That neither should ever be mentioned at the last Day. What then does he gain by these Negative kind of Arguments? It makes just as much

much against him, as for him. If it is a *Moral Good or Evil* to be brought to Account, for following or not following his Example, it certainly is so for not receiving him in other Respects, and both upon the same equal Footing, of being literally and plainly set forth in Holy Scripture. But I am sorry to see after all, our confident Author, so considerable a Moral Philosopher, as he appears in his own Eyes, to be afraid of his real Judge at the Last Day, as to conceal and secrete him: For he makes *God himself* to be the Judge at that Day,* whereas it is notorious to all that ever heard of the Gospel, that *Christ* will then be Judge, and that all Judgment is committed to him: and I pray God, that his Book under Consideration, may not be one of his *Works*, for which he shall be called to account.

6. OUR learned Author has another specific Reason for his special Determination of the Case, and that is because Sacrifice, Atonement, Propitiation, is all *Cheat*, and *Imposture*, *Priestcraft*, and *Judaism*, to produce all that might be collated upon this Head, would be the same Thing as to cite one Quarter at least of his Book. This is certainly going to the Bottom of Matters, and blowing up all Revelation at once, provided his Authority, his new-coin'd never-heard-of History, and contradictory Reasoning, may be admitted into Creeds and Articles against all Authority, all true History, and all solid Reasoning to the contrary. His general Outcry is, that the Jewish Sacrifices are an astonishing Institution, a Mystery of Priest-

* Page 439.

craft;

craft; that Propitiation, Atonement, was all a Trick and Cheat of Priests*, a gross Impostition upon the Common Sense and Understandings of the People†, that the *Israelites*, both Prophets and Priests were *Egyptianiz'd*‡, imbibed false Principles from *Egypt*, and the People retain'd the constitutional Character of that Priestly enslaved Nation§. That the Origin of *Sacrifice* was from Priestcraft there, and likewise of *Miracles*** . That the *Israelites* took all Opportunity of revolting to Idolatry, by reason their national establish'd Worship was so prodigiously Expensive, and their Clergy, or Priests, and Levites, such absolute Masters of their Property††, that *Joseph* was the first that made the Priesthood independent, and hereditary, and enslaved the Nation‡‡.

As to this last falsity there is such an effectual Confutation in the *Weekly Miscellany*, † that he might have been asham'd to repeat it in a Book come out since, and take no Notice of the solid Arguments produced against it; with respect to the rest, it is all imaginary, repugnant to all History, and unsupported by any Thing but his own confident Affirmation, or, as this Deponent, living so many thousand Years after, farther faith upon his own Knowledge. We see with what intent this Author receives, and compliments Revelation, in order to deride and mock it, just as our Saviour was formerly acknowledged a King for no other Purpose. But if a few of the many Inconsistencies of this Evidence

* Page 127. † Page 156. ‡ Page 257, 254.
 § Page 255, 6. ** Page 238, 241. †† Page 129.
 ‡‡ Page 239. ‡ See *December* 4, 1736, and a preceding Paper.

are

are attended to, every Body will be ready to contemn, instead of Hearing it out.

1. HE makes Sacrifices the Invention of the *Priests* in *Egypt*, yet owns * the first Sacrifices were offer'd, as they certainly were, by Fathers and Heads of Families, who have the chief Care of the Prosperity of those under them. We may observe by the Way, a very good Reason from the Origin of Things, why *Sovereigns* succeeding to the Paternal Government should copy that Pattern, be the Head of the Church, and have the Supreme Care and Controul in Religion. And if the Acceptableness of the Sacrifice consists, as he says † in the Dearness and Value of it to the Owner or Offerer, how came Heads of Families to be willing to part with their *best Things* in order to recommend themselves to Heaven, if there was not a previous Signification and Command from thence for Sacrifice of some kind, and then the Choice of the best of that kind followed of itself? I have shewn in the preceding Book, how very improbable, nay morally impossible it is that Sacrifice should be an human Institution. But if the Acceptableness is to be derived from a Submission to Divine Authority, as an Acknowledgment of the Right of commanding, and the Duty of obeying, this makes it of Divine Institution, and brings Revelation along with it; for how can a Divine Command be known without Revelation? Or if the atoning, reconciling Virtue must arise as he suggests partly from the Command of God, partly from the Value and Dearness of the Thing to the Owner, what can more enhance the Excellency of the Sacrifice of *Christ*?

* Page 235.

† Page 210.

2. HE

2. HE sufficiently accuses the Priests and Clergy of understanding their own Interest; whilst he deposes against them, "That they made themselves the only authorized Mediators between the People and God*;" but is it not strange how it should ever come into their Heads, to part with that beneficial Office; or to forge a Revelation that takes it out of their Hands, and sets up *Christ alone* in that Office and Dignity? Or how came the Protestant Part of them, to resign an opulent flourishing Dominion over Conscience for the Sake of Truth, and comparative Poverty, and, by an uncontroled Licence of the Age, of being vilified and run down in the open Market-Place, in Print, notwithstanding. Are these Accusations or Encomiums?

3. HE says without one Word of Proof, the *Jews* revolted so much to Idolatry because of the Expence of the public Worship, and the great Gains the Clergy got by it: But the Record insinuates quite another Reason, and that was the Gratification of their lascivious Appetites religiously pamper'd in the Idolatrous Worship of their Neighbours.

4. THOUGH the Law of *Moses* admitted no Pardon of Sin, as pertaining to Conscience in their Sacrifices, but only of Sins and Transgressions of the Law of their Constitution; is it not a polite Demand, and a pleasant Kind of Challenge to any of the Clergy †, (as if any would be so ill at Leisure as to humour him in such a whimsical Proposal) to prove and make out

* Page 243.

† Page 127.

from

from the *Jewish* Accounts of Sacrifice, that the Life of the Sacrifice was vicarious for the Offender; whether they were in Possession of such an Opinion in Virtue of those Statutes and Ordinances, or whether it did not derive from more ancient Time; when he has over and over declared the *Jewish* Sacrifices to be all *Cheat*, learnt in, and brought with them out of *Egypt*; to what purpose is it to appeal to an arrant Imposture for finding out Truth? He can never be concluded by Evidence he has already cashier'd, and excepted against. Besides, he has another Evasion ready, if he should be pinch'd at any Time with respect to any *Institution*, or *positive* of Revelation, viz. that the Thing is *interpolated*. For he in effect affirms, whatever is not moral therein is interpolated*.

5. HE represents Christianity as a political Faction among the *Jews*, that Christ as the Saviour of the *World*, was the Gospel of *St. Paul* only, and not the Gospel of *Peter*, *James*, and *John* †, who confin'd Salvation to the *Jews* only, or Proselytes to them: Yet *St. John* declares openly in the Face of this Author, *whoever* believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting Life ‡, and that he is the Propitiation not for our Sins only, but also for the Sins of the *whole World* §; and *St. Peter* pronounces God to be no Respector of Persons, but in every Nation, he that feareth him and worketh Righteousness, is accepted of him §. That there is none other Name under Heaven given among *Men whereby we must be saved* †. Which Salva-

* Page 440.

|| 1 *John* ii. 2.

† Page 354.

§ *Acts* x. 34.

‡ III. 15.

† *Acts* iv. 12.

tion and eternal Life this Author with amazing Assurance and Uncharitableness confines to the *Jews only*, as if the Messiah was *Jesus and Christ, Saviour and Deliverer* to them *exclusively*, and in no other Sense, but as Restorer of the Kingdom to *Israel*, and to the House of *David* *.

BUT not to tire the Reader with Inconsistencies and false Reasoning upon this Head, I proceed to the

II. HIS *Second* Impeachment against common Christianity. This respects the *positives* or *instituted* Parts, as Means to an End. The End we are both happily agreed in, *viz.* moral Righteousness. But he traduces and excommunicates the *Christian Means Baptism* and the *Lord's-Supper* (he ought to have included Worship of God *through the Mediator*, inasmuch as the other are the Initiation into, and continual Sustainance of this) upon two Accounts. 1. Because of the great *Discord* of Opinion among Christians with respect to them. 2. Because they are not *congenate* in his Language (I suppose he means *congruous*) Means to that End.

1. THEY are not to be endured, because there is such a vast diversity of Opinion concerning them. This he repeats with Satisfaction at the Beginning of his Book, and with triumph at the End of it. He argues the chief Ground for rejecting the peculiar, nay, the most important and concerning Doctrines of Revelation; is the Variety and Contrariety of Sentiments about them; that consequently none of

* Page 349.

the

the Doctrines of Revelation [as distinguished from Deism] can be fundamental or necessary *. Again, to this Day there are not any two Sects, or Parties, who can agree about any one System, or Scheme, of what they call positive instituted Religion. "I challenge all or any of them to name me any one single Point of Inspiration, or mere Revelation, in which they are agreed, or which they do not differently understand and interpret as much as any two different and contrary Doctrines in the World †." But if this is a good Argument, it proves too much, and consequently nothing at all, at least peculiarly against the positive Parts of Christianity. If they are to be condemned merely upon this Account, the like Diversity of Opinion will rise up in Judgment against his own dear Religion, the Religion of Nature. Have there not actually been as many (perhaps more, two hundred and eighty are reckon'd up) Divisions and Subdivisions of Opinion concerning the *Summum Bonum* among Philosophers, as there are Divisions among Christians. Is there therefore no Truth, nothing fundamental or necessary neither in the End, nor the Means? They both administer to different Opinions (though not equally different) and both are occasion'd one and the same Way; by either adding to, or leaving out more or less Ideas than really belong to it; or perhaps for want of that easy Observation of the Religion of the End, and the Religion of the Means, which heals the Breaches, recovers Misunderstandings, and makes a perfect Reconciliation. Is the Fault in the Revelation, or the Readers, in their Judgment or their Passions, their Capacity for sound

* Page 15, 16, 17.

† Page 442, 443.

Knowledge,

Knowledge, or their pre-conceiv'd Notions and warping Prejudices?

As to his Challenge of naming any one single Point of Inspiration, or mere Revelation, wherein they are agreed. I fancy I can name him two. One is the Prophecy, That there shall be *false Teachers, who shall privily bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them* *. They are sufficiently agreed in the Truth of that, by unhappy Experience. Another thing of mere Revelation they are united and agreed in is, That *Jesus Christ the Mediator* between God and Man, is Son of God, and Son of Man. Had Christians been so prudent as to have rested in that inspired Definition, or general Declaration of that most complete Mediator of Redemption, and Intercession for the Salvation of the World, what Rivers of Ink, and Blood might have been saved for better Uses!

2. The second Ground of his Indignation and outrageous ill Treatment of *Positives* is, because they are not *congenerate* Means for carrying on and improving moral Righteousness (I presume he intended by that Expression congruous, apt, or well fitted for that purpose). With respect to these, he openly declares, "he receives [Matters of Revelation] upon the natural Reasons and Fitness of the Things themselves, and not upon Testimony at all †." That "there is one, and but one certain and infallible Mark, or Criterion of Divine Truth, or of any Doctrine as coming from God, which we are obliged to comply with as a Matter of Re-

* 2 Pet. ii. 1,

† Page 84.

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"ligion and Conscience: And that is the moral Truth, Reason or Fitness of the Thing itself *," he elsewhere dogmatically pronounces that "there is nothing of that Sort, no manner of Connexion between these Means and that End. That every positive Law, of what Nature or Kind soever, must be just and right, supposing it to be a Command from God, (speaking of that to Abraham for sacrificing Isaac) how unreasonable or unfit soever it might appear to our weak, imperfect, and limited Understandings: But then the Question is, how God should command any such Things, or what Proof could be given of it if he did †." If therefore any of those *Positives* presents itself in a different View, it is insufferable. "And if there are any positive Laws in Religion, it must consist in keeping close to the original Institution ‡." This positive Writer, it seems, has not the least Charity, nor one civil or respectful Word, nor any the least Regard for these positive, instituted, solemn Parts of Christianity, but discards them utterly in general and particular, as having no moral Reason, Fitness or Congruity in them, or any of them; but, what is still worse, all this Declamation is publish'd to the World, without producing any thing like Argument, unless railing Assertions, naked of good Reason, can be supposed to pass for such with any Lover of Truth. Now though I have already shewn, at large, in the *Mediatorial Scheme*, the intimate Connexion, particular Aptness, and exact Fitness of those Means, to the End we are both agreed in, or, in other Words, the internal Evidence, or moral Truth of those *Positives*,

* Page 85, 86.

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† Page 134.

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‡ Page 110.

since

since Revelation has discover'd and applied them to the Religion of the End ; and, I may farther add from him, that (if small Things may be compared to great) a *New Scheme* of End and Means, Principle and Consequence, Cause and Effect, is open'd to the Mind of Man, like a Sir *Iaac Newton's Principia*, or *Euclid's Elements*, tho' certain Truths before, were never discover'd before *, I am nevertheless ready to correspond to this learned Author in further Manifesting the utter Invalidity of his few wretched inconsistent Reasons to the contrary. As where he says, " The Religion of the End differs in nothing, " from the Religion of the Means, but as the " Habit is different from its necessary, corre- " lative Acts, which mutually and reciprocally " strengthen, confirm, and improve each other, " and therefore the Means in Religion have as " clear and necessary a Relation to the End, as " any natural Means can have to their proper " End †." He before describes the Religion of the End, " as consisting in moral Truth and " Righteousness considered as an inward Charac- " ter, Temper, Disposition or Habit in the " Mind ;" and after says, " as all Religion lies " in the right Knowledge of God and ourselves, " in acting agreeably to the Relations we stand " to one another, &c. it is plain, that the " great Source and Fountain of all this must be " Attention, Contemplation, or a close Appli- " cation of the Mind to moral Truth, Reason, " and Fitness of Things. This is the first Spring " and Origin of all moral Virtue and Religion, " and true Happiness †."

* Page 144. † Page 416. ‡ Page 416, 417.

IN answer ; I may alledge, that though God has the same Right that a Father or Master has of giving Commands, and yet of not giving the Reasons of them to their Children, or Servants, still so much better is he than a common Father or Master, that it has pleased his Divine Wisdom, to lay the Obligation of his positive Commands and Institutions in the real Nature, moral Truth and Fitness of Things, as well as in the Authority of his own Commandment, that the Mind of Man may have a perpetual Evidence without any Error or Deception, that God has indeed commanded the Thing ; whence follows, according to our Author's *Criterion*, our necessity (without begging of Questions) of obeying and submitting thereto, as a Matter of Religion and Conscience. How can Deists themselves refuse to receive and comply with them, if they have any Conscience or sincere Respect to the Religion of the End, when it so evidently appears to them, that these Positives are so far from being mechanical Means of Salvation, as they formerly misapprehended or misrepresented them, that their very Tendency and Design is, to work and perfect moral Righteousness more and more, by a moral, rational Operation ?

FOR, indeed, they are Divine Means, the very best appointed in the World (I might call them *congenerate*) to the Attention of the Mind, whereby, and upon that Occasion to improve and strengthen itself in its Duty, and Proficiency in all moral Righteousness more and more, consulting the Temper, and cultivating that Character it ought to be possessed of, for securing the Favour of God, or letting its Light shine be-

fore Men. *Attention* is as it were the Stomach of the Mind and inward Man, and therefore must have *some Thing* to digest, to feed and recruit the Life of God in Man. Now if this same *Attention* is neither starv'd nor diverted, but verily and indeed occupied to the full, as well as agreeably affected; and all the Faculties, Understanding, Will, and Affections attract their Nourishment and receive their Health and Vigour in Holiness and Righteousness from the due Use of these *Positives*; and the outward and visible Signs in the Two Sacraments are purposely instituted as *Symbols* to the Attention of the Mind, bestowing its solemn Attendance upon those holy Means for those holy Ends: Then the Use and Value of those Divine Means to our human Needs remain uncontestable by any, even by our Author himself; especially if, in the next Place, I can prove them according to his own *Criterion*, to be *congenerate* Means, viz. the best adapted in the World, for the End of advancing in all Righteousness, to higher Degrees, and greater Constancy. Then there may be a real efficacious Connexion between these Means and that End, notwithstanding he peremptorily denies upon no Grounds at all, that there is any Connexion at all; then they may indeed be acknowledged fit and right, and continued with all safety, by all reasonable Men as rational, moral Means, notwithstanding, and in contempt of his not only fallible, but false, scandalous, innumerable Affeuerations of being *absurd*, &c. Then, by his Leave, in Virtue of his own Concession, if they have moral Truth and Fitness in them, they may be *instituted* of God, and appear worthy of him by his own way of proving and admitting any Thing to come from Him.

SURE

SURE he does not mean his *congenerate* in that Sense *ex grano fit acervus*, because that would bring up his Account of Means of Grace to be *Mechanical*, which he justly abhors in Religion: Besides in *material* Ends and Means, it is known to Dealers in Physick, that *Antigenerate* Means are sometimes more serviceable for producing the desired End, as in the Maladies proceeding from the Extremes of *Alcalies* and *Acids*: These, I apprehend, are not *congenerate* Means yet he is pleased to affirm in his positive Manner, as above cited, "that the Means in Religion have as clear and necessary a Relation to the End, as any natural Means have to their proper natural End." But if all natural Means are not *congenerate* to their End, why must all religious Ones be so to their End? To pass by little Slips, I must proceed to believe that if he intended by *congenerate* Means, *similar* to the End, such as Acts are to Habits, there can neither be Truth in the Supposition, nor Propriety in the Expression. Because *Attention* which he makes to be the Means, "or the great Source and Fountain, first Spring and Origin of all moral Virtue and Religion and true Happiness," is not a religious Act of the Mind as such, but its *Disposition* or *Capacity* receptive of those Occasions, Opportunities, or Means in Life, which are by its Care and Application convertible to those Acts of moral Righteousness, which inure into Habit, Temper, and Character; if the Mind bestows its Attention altogether, or unseasonably, or more than is right upon secular Things, it accordingly and proportionably contracts an Habit, or Character *that way*: But either way there must be Objects for the Attention

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tion to fix upon, as the Means of performing those Acts which Repetition consummates into Habits, whether in Religion, or in other Affairs. To put therefore the best Construction that can be put upon our acute Authors meaning in the Term *congenerate* as coupled with Means, I conclude that it is equivalent to *congruous, fit, proper, apt* to produce the End they are designed to effect.

I now proceed to prove against him that the *three Positives* of Christianity are all and singularly invested with those Characteristicks, possess'd of these good Qualities, and endear'd, if due Attention is given to their Reason and moral Fitness, to the Interest of Mankind, and the constant Usage of Christians.

I. As to the Worship of God thro' the Mediator *Jesus Christ*, He says, as above, "that all Religion lies in the right Knowledge of God, "and Ourselves," and elsewhere, "That *Self-acquaintance* is the first necessary to Divine Science or moral Philosophy." Now as the Revelation of the New Testament is founded in the truest Knowledge of God and Man, is there any Thing under the Copes of Heaven so well adapted, or so fully provided, as its great Discovery of *Christ Jesus*, the *Sent of God*, the *Son of God*, and of *Man*, the adequate complete Mediator between both, full of Grace and Truth, for displaying and confirming the Knowledge of God; the Holiness and Righteousness of his unspotted Nature; and for opening the Cause and discovering the Source of the conscious guiltiness and frailty of degenerated human Nature, what was its Lapse and Fall, and what is its Cure and Remedy; one

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Knowledge calleth to the other Knowledge, but there is none sufficient to answer, or to offer at a Compromise, or any competent to make a perfect Reconciliation, but the sole all-perfect Mediator of our Profession. Our Author is so envious and spitefully bent against this glorious Hope of the Christian Calling, that he would defeat it wholly by misrepresenting it, affirming, That Christians "don't worship the Father at all, "while all their real Veneration, Love, and "Obedience are paid to the *Son* *." But I have before so copiously treated of the admirable Benefits, &c. of this Mediator, that I shall be in danger of Repetition in proceeding further. I would only be permitted to observe, in brief, in opposition to his truthless Assertion, that this positive, commanded, instituted Part of Christianity, is a singular good, *congenerate Means, i. e.* most excellently suited and adapted to the moral Powers of Man for production of moral Righteousness in Plenty, not only from solemn occasional Application, but in the daily Usage of our Lives, in the Address of our Christian Devotions.

For does not this daily keep open the delightful Avenue for our view of God and our Access to him without repulse? As it wings our drooping Prayers, so it sweetens and daily secures Repentance for Sins of daily incursion, 'till we get the perfect Mastery over them; for we have no Licence to make use of his *Name* but upon our Repentance; and to that we are urged and almost unavoidably led upon thinking of his Name, *i. e.* as oft as we think of our *Prayers*. The fallible

* Page 153.

Understanding is daily kept in its proper Sphere, free from the Excesses and Inquietudes, the Despair or Presumption that arises from faulty Knowledge of God, or Ourselves. The stubborn *Will* is daily curbed, disciplined in right Choice, advised by its best Friend, and animated in the pursuit of its Happiness, and of the Ways of pleasing God by daily striving to relinquish all love and liking to Sin, and daily advancing in Virtue and Holiness of living: For why should not every Christian be so true to his Name and his Discipleship, as to learn from him to die to and forsake his Sins daily, seeing Christ purposely died on Earth that we might forsake them, and siteth at the Right Hand of God to intercede for our Pardon, and crown us with Life and all Blessedness, when we apply in his Name for the same? The various *Affections*, upon mention of *Christ* and *Hopes of Glory* in him, are daily summoned up to Heaven to Things above, to attend that Life which is hid with Christ in God, and to loosen their Embraces, and Attachment to Things on Earth.

2. If we consider *Baptism*, he himself owns *Engagement in the Christian Covenant* *, and his own allow'd Sense of the primitive Baptismal Creed †, both conspire to declare and argue it *not to be a Mechanical Means* of Faith and Religion, but rather a Rational Moral one; and so serves to confute himself, and save me the Trouble, when he every where else, according to the Tenor of his Book, arraigns this and the other positive instituted Parts of the Christian Religion, as no other than *Mechanical*

* Page 172.

† Page 395, 396.

Means

Means of Grace, and no better than *absurd non-sensical Things*; and, because Baptism, and Bread and Wine, were in the World before, and sometimes used by the *Jews* upon particular Occasions, he amuses his Reader with a pleasant kind of Argument, that Christ *instituted* neither of them, tho' he expressly commanded, and peremptorily requires the Application of them to his Religion, constitutive as they are, with peculiar Additions of the most solemn Parts of it; and is not that a sufficient, intelligible Sense of *being instituted* by him? What tho' no *Moral Character* was annex'd by the *Jews* in the solemn (not daily, cursory) Use of either of them, the denying of which without Proof, is a poor way of begging the Question? Does it follow in the Christian Application of each, when one Thing is made a Sign or Symbol of another, external Visibles of internal Spiritual better Things, that therefore there is no *Moral Character* required to be connected to, nor *inward spiritual Relation* design'd to be begun, or kept up in the Use thereof? More especially seeing *moral religious Words*, importing Engagements and Relation to the Father, as *one God*, to the Son as *Mediator and Prophet*; to the Holy Ghost, as *Sanctifier, Aider, Supporter and Director* are, by his Confession *, annex'd to Christian Baptism, and if annex'd, must be to this Purpose, and carry that Importance; and he can as little deny, but that *morally religious Words*, *Do this in Remembrance of me; this is my Blood of the New Covenant which is shed, &c.* are expressly incorporated into, and go along with the Lord's Supper.

* Page 395, 396.

If

IF Baptism imports *Covenant*, and implies *Engagement*, can he offer to deny any more, that there is no *moral Truth* nor *Fitness* in that Positive? Can he, if he has any Ingenuity or Honour left, refuse, or delay to retract his Book full of such senseless false Accusations? For does the Understanding apprehend any Thing that carries more moral Rectitude with it, than *keeping Covenant*, and being *true to Engagement*? Or does the Will almost dare to recede from it? Or the Passions be any longer forward to rebel against it? And is not this Means and Method perfectly suitable and *congenerate* to all the Moral Powers and Efforts of Man for Production of Moral Righteousness in Thought, Word, and Deed?

3. If the *Lord's Supper* is reflected upon with any due Attention, that will be found to be far from being a Mechanical Means of Grace, but on the contrary to be replete with rational Truth, and moral Fitness of Things. Our Author where, (as above) he denies the *Death of Christ* to be the Meritorious Cause, he is free to acknowledge it a *Moral Means* of Salvation; tho' I will do him Justice, that he means no more than so far as an *Example* the most perfect in all the World, is a moral Cause or occasion of imitating Righteousness; *that* is all the saving Virtue he allows in Christ our Saviour and Redeemer. But that is but one (perhaps the least) part of the *Remembrance of him dying and shedding his Blood for the Remissions of Sins*. If his *Example*, and our *Imitation* in Virtue, is the Principal, or the whole lasting Duty of the Remembrance, as he would fondly stint and confine it, tho' it is

is never once said or offer'd to the Communicant this is my Example, but this is *the New Covenant in my Blood*, or, as it is varied, this is *my Blood in the New Covenant, for the Remission of Sins*, then it ought to have been express'd, that Christ died *for our Virtues*, for *the Just*, not for our Sins, nor for the Unjust; if he solely and only died for what is to come after. A good Example has some relation to, and connexion with *Virtue*, so as to be said to be ordain'd for it; Sins stand in need of Propitiation, Atonement, Forgiveness, not Virtue; But how should the Example of one be an Atonement, Propitiation for, or Remission of the *past* Sins of another, it may possibly be an Inducement to *future* Obedience, but how does the same Example as such and no more, bring the needful Peace of Conscience and Satisfaction to the Mind, how *past* Disobedience is forgiven and remember'd no more against the Perseverer in, after sober, righteous and godly Living? This is forcing Sense upon Words, nor can it with any propriety be reconciled to the Expression of dying for Sins, or Forgiveness of, or being a Propitiation for them, or making our Peace with God; nor can any Figure of Speech, but that called Nonsense, make any Apology for it.

IN short *the Mediatorial Scheme* in the New Covenant, which is recogniz'd in the Lord's Supper, ordain'd by the Mediator of it purposely until his coming again, to preserve by that Method, and keep up in that Solemnity, our Relation to himself as *Mediator* of our Redemption and Intercession, is a most divine Scheme (not of Clerical, Hierarchical Invention)

tion) of the most profuse stupendous Love of Heaven, in conferring the greatest Benefits that God could bestow, or Man receive. If it is a Commemoration of the most inestimable Benefits, Favours, and Blessings, then the Scene of *Gratitude*, with all the Inducements and Obligations in the World, opens itself to the Heart of Man, surprizes his Attention, and delights his Remembrance. Than such *Gratitude*, such a bounden, such a willingness of Duty, can there possibly be laid a more Divine, more Godlike Scene for attracting Human Nature, for convincing a Rational Creature, or for prevailing upon a free moral Agent to do as he ought to do? Who can refuse such an Invitation leading and hastening him to Repentance? or not rejoice in seeing the Oppression of his guilty Fears taken off, and his Prayers carried up safe to the Throne of Grace, and there received with a clear Welcome, and all perfect Acceptableness? Upon Remembrance of so much Kindness, and so great a Benefactor thus dying for him, and of the New and better Covenant in his Blood for reception of accumulated Privileges and Blessings, filial Freedom, fearless Frailties of human Nature, and the Opening the Kingdom of Heaven and Glory to all Believers, who are honest sincere Doers; the *Understanding* of the devout Communicant is in raptures of Divine Sentiments, and yet is calm and undisturbed; his *Will* is captivated to Godliness and Duty; his *Love* and *Affections* in remembrance of so vast a Love and infinite Affection, confer'd, and still presiding over, is pre-engaged to God and his Saviour, and not at liberty, for any long Time, to follow after Follies, or be led astray with the Delusion of false perishable Happiness.

Thus.

Thus all the moral Powers of Man are center'd with a treble Vigour in the Pursuit of Righteousness, the Love of God and every Man, and in the steady Qualifications for his immortal Happiness. And if all this, with much more, is and certainly may be the happy Consequence of a due Participation of the Lord's-Supper, I hope it will for the sake of its intrinsic Excellence, be admitted by every body else, as a moral fitting Means, and in time, by our Author himself as a *congenerate* one, closely united to, and wholly desirous of, the Religion of the End; and I appeal to the Publick, whether if I, in my Turn, should call it a *generative* (moral) Means to that End, it would not much better express its good Effect and Design, than when he from denying it to be *congenerate*, denies it to have any Connexion to the End; which I have shewn to contain no less than two Falshoods.

IF a Raven, Sparrow, or Lily may be a moral Means, I might add *congenerate*, for improving Faith or Trust in God's Providence, why may not thinking upon the Bread and Wine in the Lord's-Supper, thinking upon the Command of receiving, thinking especially upon the End of receiving, be a moral and *congenerate* Means of preserving Faith in the Mediator, keeping up our Sense and Consciousness of the New Covenant, and of our Entrance and Engagement in it? But it surprizes one most of all to find this Author from our Saviour's Manner of *moralizing* Occurrences, multiplying Sacraments with the Papists, not only to seven but to seventy*. When

* Page 204.

at the same Time he will not allow so much as *one* Sacrament upon any one *moral Account*, and particularly explodes the two Protestant Sacraments as being in his rash Opinion, and most censorious Temper, void of all Pretence of being any moral congenerate Means at all to the End of moral Righteousness. How thoughtless and superficial this is in so profound a Writer, let others judge.

AFTER denying roundly, that there is any Religion at all in Positives, he in one Passage speaks with some Diffidence*. “If any Religion in positive Laws, it must consist in keeping close to the original Institution;” but he happens to be almost as much mistaken in this, as in the other. For if moral Truth, Reason, and Fitness mix with and preside over these Positives, what is of a moral Character is variable according to *Circumstances* as the Providence of God is pleased to vary them; and consequently the original Design of the two Sacraments may be punctually observ’d and complied with, though all the original Circumstances are not, nor perhaps cannot so well, for changeable providential Reasons, be punctually continued; but may nevertheless by human Prudence, which is always supposed to correspond to Divine Providence, be varied to the Approbation of God, where-ever he has superinduced a genuine undissembled Reason, for a prudential Alteration: in all such Cases the everlasting equitable Maxim, *I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice*, will be the Justification over the Face of the whole Earth.

* See the Index to his Book, p. 110.

III. The

III. The *third* grand Topick of the Dialogue under Consideration is, the Compliments he abounds in every where, and makes a Present of to the *Clergy*. Every Reader will perceive that to be one of the chief Designs of writing, and a main Turn of his Book. With this View he affirms, by virtue of his own Authority, that the Sacraments were not intended as standing Laws of Christianity*, though the Revelation expressly makes them so, and that Maxim with respect to Baptism and the *Jewish* Custom to the first Proselytes and their Descendants, *if the Root is holy, so are the Branches* notwithstanding, as I have elsewhere made appear against a celebrated *Sociinian*; he seems to appropriate Baptism to the Physician of the Body, a Regimen by way of *Cold Bath*, but of no spiritual Use†. That the Clergy, however, have no Part nor Lot in the Matter‡, though the Nature of Things evinces the contrary, from the Confusion of what is every Bodies Business is no Bodies; Order must arise, and some particular Persons must successively be appointed. So that his true Aim at the Positives seems to be levelled at *them*, to take them down, find them nothing to do, and so kick up their Heels, and push them clear off the Stage of Christendom, as utterly useless in their Generation. For he supposes every Man sufficient to teach himself Morality (the entire Gospel of Christ and Purport of all Revelation as he would make it) by the congenerate means of *Attention* in his own Hand; at that hopeful Prospect he seems to rejoice greatly, and hug

* Page 104.

† Page 110.

‡ Page 104.

himself

himself very much. But is it not a very hard Case upon them, to make all their Sermons to be *necessary Nonsense*, as before cited, when perhaps nine Parts in ten of the Sermons of the Clergy he so bitterly inveighs against are really upon the Ends of Religion, the *moral* Subjects he so much extols, and will only allow to shew their Heads in any Pulpit. To rail at them of every Denomination, without Distinction*, yet elsewhere to admit a Distinction between wise and honest, and those that are otherwise†, looks as if fury had distracted his Head, confounded his Words, betrayed him in his Genius for scolding, and would certainly rob and disappoint him also of the Effect of it. The *Popish* Clergy, it is too true, get all their Dominion by their Notion of Propitiation, because they make themselves the efficacious Hands of Absolution: Yet without distinguishing, he avers against Fact, that these Positives or instituted Parts of Religion are *very* beneficial to the Clergy including *Protestant*‡. But the Question is, whether they could well have less than they have, suppose them set a-part by the State, to preach nothing else but moral Righteousness, *i. e.* his Gospel. To indulge his satyrical Temper (which *Theophanes* who knows him well distinguishes him for, making it, “as necessary to him as Breathing, “and that he can no more live without it, than “without daily Bread, or natural Food||,) especially upon a fashionable Topick, may be a little excusable from his great Desire of being in the Mode with your thoughtless kind of People. But to call them *Knaves, Cheats, Impostors, &c.*

* Page 435.
 ‡ Page 87.

† Page 431.

‡ Page 199, 177.

indiscriminately

indiscriminately and from Generation to Generation, without Proof that all are so, I wish it may not be accounted a little Wickedness in, or a very great Contradiction to, a *Moral Philosopher*; but to judge and declare them all to be *Hypocrites* for not believing what they profess to believe, is not only to rob Man of his Character, but God also of his incommunicable one of Knowing the Heart, and so upon the Ruins of all good Manners to mount up to Impiety itself. But I pray God Almighty to forgive him all Sins against his Divine Majesty, as well as against Man and his Indigencies, whatsoever he has folded up under the Title of a *Moral Philosopher*, and give him a Sense to repent of them, under a better and truer Sense of the Nature of God, and Man. And now in Conclusion, let me a little expostulate with this strange Writer, in the Name of God, and Man.

How can you justify your Book before either, in thus presumptuously *dismembering* the Revelation of the one, and robbing (I wont say feloniously) the other of his *Peace of Conscience*, the greatest certainly that bears the Name of P E A C E, or the Heart of Man can have any value for? All Revelation from Heaven is founded in a *New Covenant*, for the Comfort and Consolation of Mankind, as well as his Instruction; but the Consideration of either Old, or New Covenant is shut out of your Scheme: And so is the *Mediator* of the *New Covenant* in all respects, except bare naming him once under that Character*, without ever putting him to any use, or assigning him any thing to do in such a Station. This is a most miserable, disconsolate Chasm in your System of Salvation, A *Mediator* between God

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* Page 396.

E

and

and Man, supposes both Parties at variance; and in order to an effectual Reconciliation, some real Propitiation, Atonement, or Satisfaction to be negotiated by this Mediator, such as is suitable, in the first Place, to the Honour of God, and becoming the Dignity of his Laws to accept; and then, in the next Place, such as may give the *best Assurance* and *Pledge* unto Man, that his *past Sins* will be forgiven, upon Condition of doing his Duty for the future, to the best of his Power, conforming to those easy Terms, and regularly applying to those Means, Aids, Motives, Helps and Instruments prescribed by the Mediator, which he has laid down for his Assistance, and recommended to his Benefit entirely; that he may be enabled to do the Will of God, and not falling short of the Qualifications for his Favour, may live in solid Peace of Conscience with him in this Life, and in eternal Happiness in the next. But in your disconcerted, disfigured Scheme, the Mediator does in no Sense, that Words can bear, make our Peace with God, or become a Propitiation, or die for our Sins, for the Forgiveness or Remission of them, or bring any such Comfort unto Man: Man does every Thing of that Kind without his *Mediation*. He neither *superintends* the Means, Aids, Motives, Helps and Instruments of Reconciliation, nor has any thing to do with them, I mean by Motives in the Sense I have already treated of them; you make nothing transferable from, or allow any Interchange with this Mediator, but his Instruction and *Example* in the moral Law of Righteousness. His Death with you is altogether for Example of *Suffering* for Righteousness, or *Testimony* of the Truth of his Doctrine; you suppose also his Life an Example of well-doing, that is the *Ultimatum*, the

whole

whole of your defective Saviour, your sorry, your no Mediator. You raise him indeed from the Dead; but that has nothing to do with your Method of saving the World, unless Man by *imitating* him can be able to raise himself also from the Dead: but you deny or dissemble the true End and Reason of his Resurrection, *viz. he rose again for our Justification*, that he might appear before all the World to have *conquer'd* our last Enemy, Death, in our Nature (as well as to have foretold his own Rising again, neither of which any other did, besides himself, who had been raised from the Dead) to dissolve that Wages of Sin with Honour and Justice, and to have made our Peace with God. You confess him to be a moral Means of our Salvation, but deny him to be a *meritorious* Cause in any respect. But how can his Resurrection in the Body be a *moral* Means of our Resurrection in it, without which there is no Salvation? Who is the Raiser of the Dead, but He who *is the Resurrection and the Life*? He must therefore be a meritorious Cause of that Hopes of Glory, and be invested with Power accordingly.

NEITHER can I find how you dispose of him after his Rising; you give him no *Ascent* to Heaven, you place him not at the *Right Hand* of God, you afford him no longer *Power* over us, nor impart any *farther Concern* for us. You *wont have this Man to reign over us*, you tie up his Hands (as far as you have the Power) from being our *Judge* or *Rewarder*, our *Lord* or *King*, our *Intercessor* or *Advocate*. And don't you thereby cruelly and wilfully deprive Mankind of the *greatest Consolations*; God of the *Glory* of that condescending Dispensation; and Christ of his *Right and Conquest*, *Rule and Regimen*, *Benefits*

E 2

nefits and Patronage towards Men? The Scripture says the *Messiah* or Mediator, *shall make Reconciliation for Iniquity, be cut off, stricken, not for himself, but for the Transgression of the People*: You contradict it, and maintain that he was cut off upon his own Account. The Scripture says, *if any Man sin we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is a Propitiation for our Sins*; and there is certainly some designed Aid, and furtherance from that Faith presiding over our best Endeavours, our Repentance, and Prayers, for getting the Mastery over our Sins, securing our Peace with God, and Sense of his Favour, above what Example can afford. Human Nature is confessedly in Distress and Despondency, not knowing how to extricate itself from the Mire and Filth of Sin without some to lend a Hand to help, and save: Revelation presents such a Saviour and Deliverer, qualified in all Respects to render our own Endeavours comfortable, and make them effectual to that End; but you either out of a Spirit of Contradiction, or Envy, will suffer nothing to be proposed from this Saviour, but his bare Example or good Advice; as if a Man that was not in, by mere speaking and nothing else, could help another out of a Ditch. You neither admit him with St. Paul whom you so much extol, as *High Priest* of our Profession, having a fellow-feeling of our Infirmities, nor that he maketh *Intercession* for us, nor that we shall stand before his *Judgment Seat*. Your Character of that Apostle is, "That he was the great Free-Thinker of his Age, the bold and brave Defender of Reason against Authority, in opposition to those who had set up a wretched Scheme of Superstition, Blindness, and Slavery,

"Slavery, contrary to all Reason, and Common Sense." * Yet this Apostle gloried in the *Cross of Christ*, in the saving Benefit of his *Death and Resurrection*, in his *Mediation and Intercession* for us, all which you are ashamed of, and banish out of your New Project: you neither permit Christ to appear there as a Mediator of Redemption, or a Mediator of Intercession, and so totally and compleatly set aside the *Mediatorical Scheme* by him, and with that the most valuable Purpose, Truth, and Design of the Holy Scriptures. What sort of a Thinker are you? or what kind of Reason is it that you set up to defend against the Authority, plain Expression, common Apprehension of St. Paul, and all the Apostles? You are jealous, but without any Cause, of your Moral Law of Nature, as if Christianity had any ill Design against it; whereas the true Design of it is known where-ever that is known, *I came not destroy the Law but to fulfil it*. Yet your Scheme and Amendments of the Gospel shew no *Resentment* in God for the breach of that Law; which looks as if it was calculated to favour those Breaches of it which are so agreeable to your new Friends the *Deists*; Can that be consistent with your Zeal for the Moral Law, or is that verbal Zeal any thing more than Affectation, or better than mere Pretence? and yet upon notorious Breaches of it, after the trifling Ceremony of Baptism, as you reckon it, you are so unkind, as to drive them into Despair, and allow them no Repentance, as I observ'd above. And you seem to make good another Observation that I have formerly made, that the *Deist* by his Game against Scripture and Christianity, plays

* Page 71.

into the Hand of the *Papist*, in those Parts of your Book where you run down the Doctrine of the *Reformers* in gross without distinction (though they were not all of one Mind) as the greatest and grossest Absurdity, and that the learned *Jesuits* took great Advantage of it, and put a stop to the Reformation.*

WHILST you would frustrate the most just and generous Religion in the World, drawn as it is both from the *true Nature* of God, and Man; and therefore equally and openly consults the Authority, Dignity and Honour of the former, as the Capacity, Frailty, and guilty Fears of the latter; you make no Provision, present no Consolation, or curative Part, but your vain Presumption upon the natural Goodness of God, in despite of his covenanted Goodness and Methods of Mercy in the Mediator, in relief of the Trouble and Anxieties of human Mind for transgressing the Law of Nature, and escaping the Guilt of past Iniquity, which yet will be the most pungent to it, whilst it preserves its Reason. That *Christ Jesus* came into the World to save repenting Sinners, is comfortless and insipid, and worthy of no manner of Acceptation upon your Hypothesis. You feed and stretch the Hopes of Mankind with eternal Life and Immortality being the Gift of God, but you falsify that very Gospel, and suppress the Truth of its being *through Jesus Christ*, in order the better to intercept any Dependence upon him for it, tho' he obtain'd it for us. You flatter also your own Fears, and the Fears of others, as if the Punishment of Hell was no more to be dreaded than an *Annihilation*.† But how

* Page 404.

† Page 400, 401.

much

much God is averse to that Experiment of his Power, and stedfastly inclin'd to our Continuance in Being, after he has put us upon the Stage of it, is plain by all the Methods he has taken, and from the constituent Parts of our Frame. But it is vastly absurd in a *Philosopher* to talk of *Annihilation*; it is so with respect to *Matter*, whose Life consists in its continual Changes and varying Shapes; with respect to *Spirits*, we have less reason to imagine that God should be reduced to that strait, for want of Room in his Universe. In short, *Annihilation* is the Fool's Paradise of Infidelity, after that is once made the Retreat of a Life buried in Sensuality. You admit, strange Supposition from a Deist! the Origin of Sin in our World, or the Apostacy of Man owing to the previous Apostacy of Angels, and that owing to Idolatry.* Here you receive Revelation, for you can have it no where else, and stretch it at the same time to your Fancy; you receive and believe the true History of Man's spiritual Distemper, but the Skill of the Physician would have been better seen, in admitting the subsequent Part of the said Revelation, as it is a Prescription for healing the same, without bold Alteration, or equally dangerous Innovation; for it is now the Fashion of distinguishing the good Judgment of a *Physician* by adhering most closely to the most Ancient, the first, and, in his way, divine *Master*. It can't be justified to the Faculty, to admit a Book of Health and Salvation in Part, and reject it in Part, when all that read it, perceive the two Parts to be inseparable and essentially connected together. But through your peculiar Art and unheard of Presumption, as before-

* Page 231.

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mentioned,

mention'd, of *interpolating* † where, and when, and what you please; no Mortal can tell what Part you like, or whether you are really affected to any Part at all, or if you should be so to some Part To-day, whether you would continue to be so To-morrow. For by that unbounded Liberty, it is plain, you may make any thing out of any ancient Scripture; and you yourself, by your fastidious Discernment, and expurgatory Genius, shall become the Author of all the Books, of all the Sentiments that have existed before you. This new extraordinary *external* Advantage that you assume over the Word (written to instruct and correct you,) to what Purposes you please to press it into your Service, is equivalent to the *Quakers* *internal* Advantage of making what they please of the same, to serve their turn; and so renders it as vain to argue with one, as the other, out of the same Book, with any hopes of Conviction.

VERY much more might be added, if I had not stinted myself in room, and had not, by this time, grown weary of answering an Author of such a Temper, and of so strange and unaccountable a Composition as this Book speaks him to be of. If these Hints may provoke some great Genius to enlarge against him, I have my Ends. I have offer'd in the *Two Volumes*, and this *Appendix*, what I think sufficient in my Judgment, and hope will appear so, in the Judgment of others, for convincing any *reasonable* Man; and that is, and *shall* be enough to say to this Writer.

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| Page | Line | ERRATA. | | Read |
|------|------|-------------------|---|------------|
| 5 | 7 | for the aforesaid | — | for any |
| 11 | 27 | after that | — | |
| 26 | 3 | Intender | — | Entendre |
| 35 | 6 | Harmonies | — | Harmonizes |



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- Gen. ii. 17. **T**HE Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, Vol. I. p. 9. ib. In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die, p. 15.
- 1 Sam. ii. 25. If one Man sin against another, God shall Judge him; but if a Man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him? Vol. I. 212.
- Pf. xxxvii. 25. Never saw the Righteous forsaken, nor their Seed begging their Bread, p. 228.
- Isaiah vi. 9. Hearing shall bear, and not understand, seeing see, and not perceive. II. 225, 244.
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- Ezek. xx. 23. Statutes not good, Judgments whereby they should not live. I. 225.
- Dan. xii. 10. None of the Wicked shall understand, but the Wise shall understand. II. 245.
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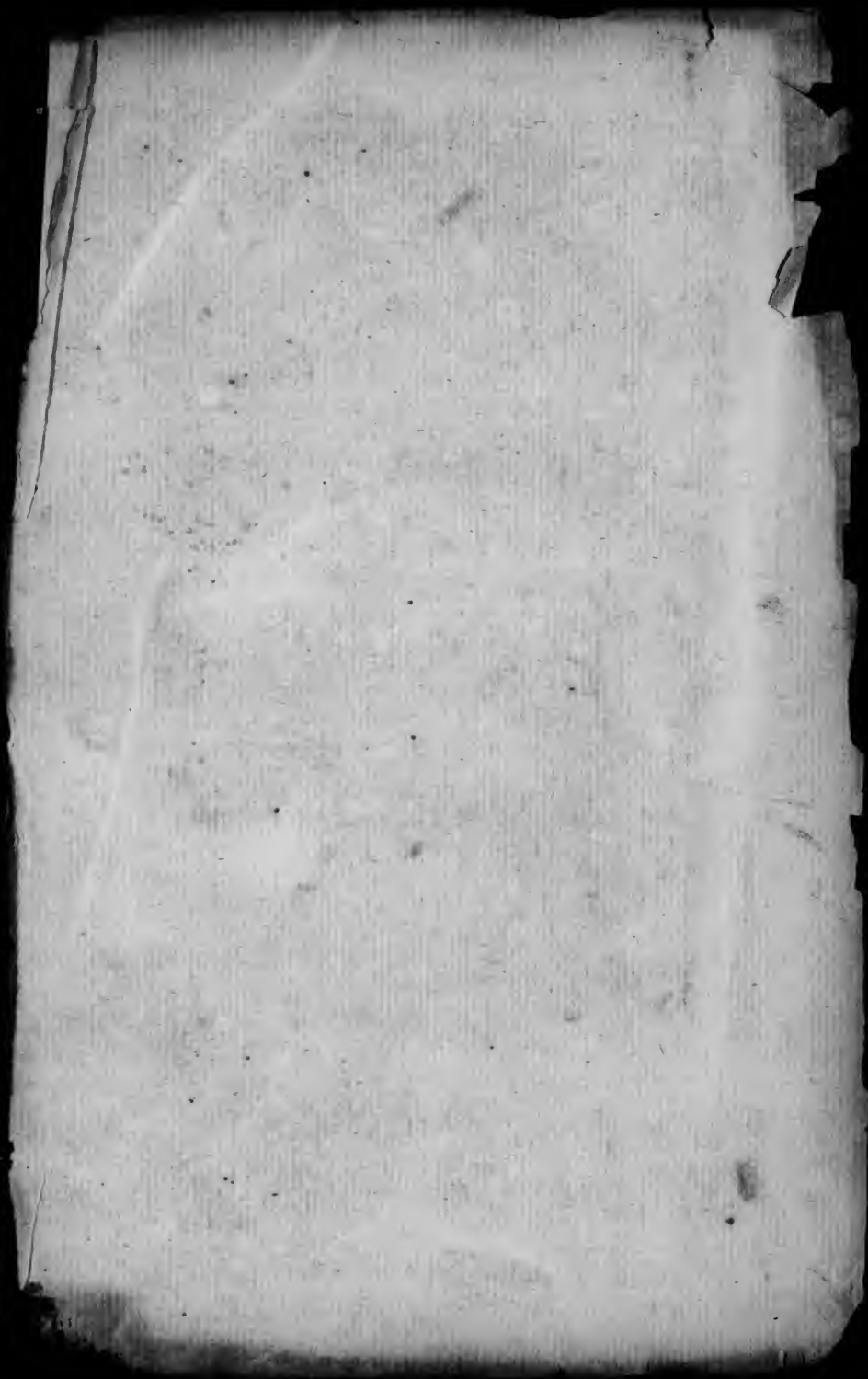
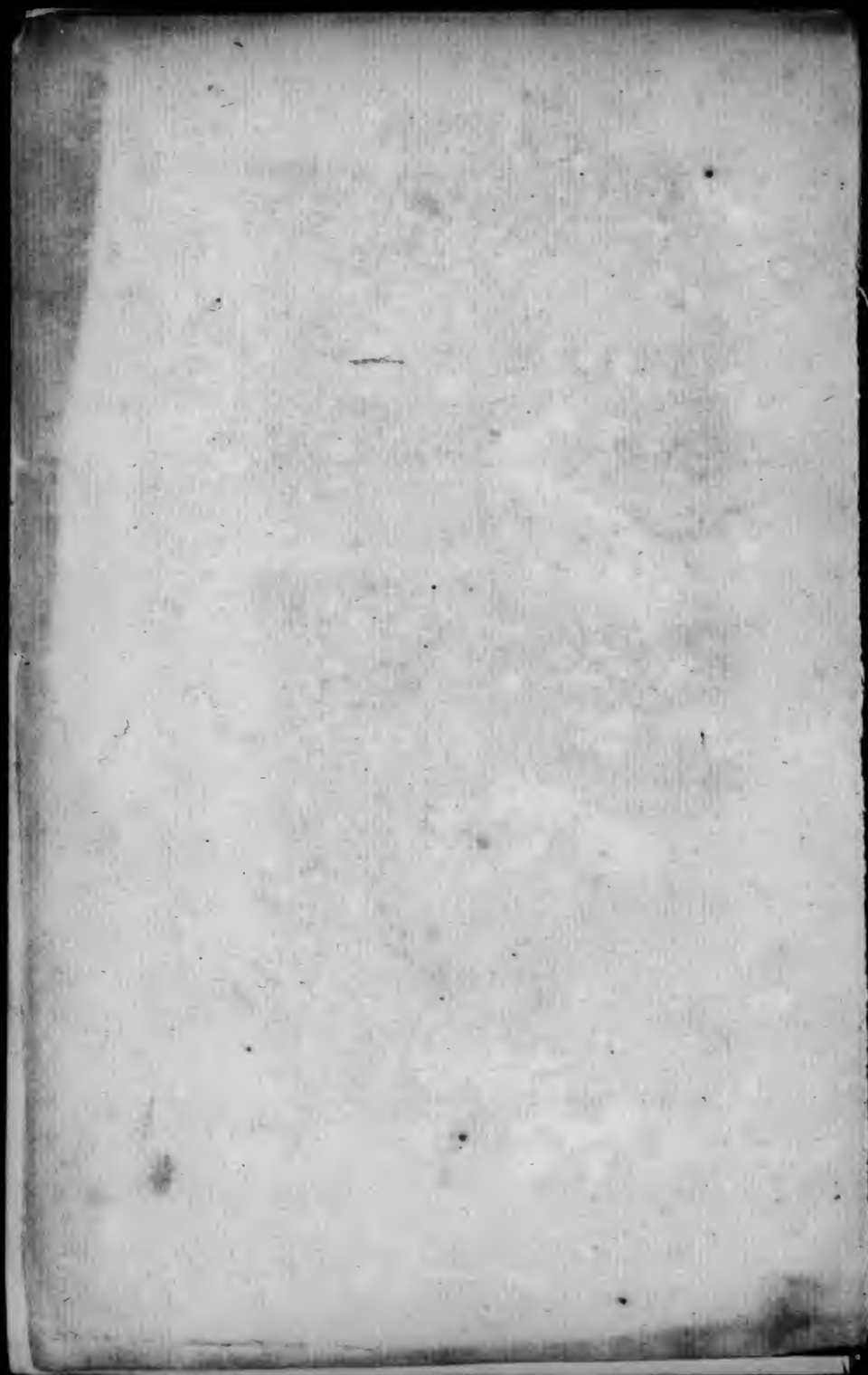
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